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THE ABDUCTED HEIRESS.

BY MRS. CAROLINE INGRAHAM.

AUTHOR OF "SARAH PERCIVAL; OR, THE BRIDE OF THE HOUSE OF GOLD," ETC. ETC.

CHAPTER IV.—CONTINUED.

At seven that evening the child was standing by the hollow elm, wrapped in a heavy cloak, and straining her eyes along the road over which the carriage was to come. All was still as death around her. It was a wild and lonely place, made doubly so by a sheet of sullen black water, lying in the woods at one side of the road, and called "the Murderer's Pond." The old housewives of the country round about, were wont to tell frightful stories of this place, and the strange sights and sounds to be heard near it. A pedlar had been murdered there years before, when the country was new, and his body thrown into the pond. Justina had often heard the story, and laughed, by the fireside of her quiet home, to think of the poor ghost, rising from the slimy waves, to frighten timid travellers into fits; but now, as she thought of it, her blood ran cold, and her heart beat audibly. She was a courageous child; but the gloom, and darkness, and loneliness around her, might have made the stoutest heart quail; and it was with a deep sensation of relief that she heard the distant sound of wheels.

"I will make no mistake," she thought to herself, and drew back into the shadow of the bushes beside the road. It was well that she did so, for the vehicle was only a market-wagon, returning from the village, and its occupants two young farmers, whose loud singing, and boisterous laughter, showed that they had partaken rather freely of the good things stored behind the bar.

She waited till they passed, and listened again intently. Another carriage was coming swiftly towards her, and this time she was not mistaken. A single lamp burned upon the box, and by its light she recognized the servant of Mrs. De Courcey. The carriage halted beside the hollow elm, and Mr. Skelligg descended and looked cautiously around.

"Little girl, are you here?" he asked, in a low voice.

Justina glided out of the underbrush, and stood by his side so quickly, that he started back in dismay.

"Bless my soul!" he exclaimed, recovering himself with a visible effort: "It is you—is it? Well—jump into the carriage then, and talk to the lady for a few moments."

Justina did as she was bid. Mr. Skelligg walked up and down the road, keeping a vigilant lookout for any chance passengers.

The child felt herself folded to a soft bosom, and an affectionate kiss was pressed upon her brow. The beauty and luxury of Eveleen De Courcey had already made a deep impression upon her heart—it only needed her affection to deepen it and complete the charm.

"And so, my child, you were brave enough to come to this dark and lonely spot, for the sake of saying good-bye to me. Shall I tell your father this?"

"Tell him anything—anything you please, dear lady,—only be sure and let him know how much I love him, and how I have longed to see him, ever since I was old enough to understand them when they spoke about him."

"I will tell him all, dear child."

"How long have you known my father?" asked Justina, suddenly.

By the light of the single lamp inside of the carriage, she saw that Mrs. De Courcey turned red and then pale again, and that the large blue eyes turned upon her, grew mild and tender as she spoke:

"For several years—before you were born, my little Justina," she said, softly. "Your father loved me, and I loved him,—and you should have been my child, not hers."

"And you will see him again?" said Justina, changing the subject with natural tact. "You will tell him how often—how very often I think of him. Oh! do you think he will ever send for me, dear lady?"

"Would you like to go to England, Justina?"

"Oh, so much!"

"What!—and leave your home here, and the friends who have been so kind to you?"

The child winced, but still said:

"I could come and see them again after a little while; and I don't love this place—it is too cold, and lonely, and dreary. Tell my father to send for me and take me home, or I shall die!"

"Justina," said Mrs. De Courcey, in an altered voice, "it is getting late and dark, and it is time we were on our way. It is wrong, too, for you to be out any later than this. Now give me one kiss, and go home like a good girl. I will tell your father all you have said; and, perhaps, in the course of two or three years he may send for you, or come to America himself to take you home."

"Two or three years!" cried Justina, impetuously: "I cannot live till then! I shall die!—I know I shall—and be buried beside my mother!"

"You talk foolishly, my dear," said Mrs. De Courcey, quietly. "What other way is there for you to take?"

"Oh, let me go with you!" cried Justina, flinging herself down upon her knees before her.

"The lady lifted her embroidered kerchief to conceal a smile of satisfaction. But she only answered, in an accent of surprise,—

"It cannot be, Justina. If you had spoken of it three days ago, I should have been glad to take you; but now it is too late."

The knowledge that there had been a chance of success only aggravated the child's grief.

A. BOBBETT. SC.

THE FIRST MEETING OF JUSTINA AND ALFRED.

"Oh, do not send me away!" she cried: "Let me go with you! I will be very good. I will not make the least trouble—I will wait on you—oh! pray, let me go!"

"Impossible!" said Mrs. De Courcey, impatiently; and, opening the carriage door, she called out:

"Mr. Skelligg, you will have to take Justina out. My dear, I am very sorry to leave you, but really I do not see what else is to be done. Now, go quietly—there's a love."

The child submitted quietly as the lawyer lifted her out; but when he placed her upon her feet, she threw herself flat upon the ground in passionate despair, and refused to rise. The two confederates exchanged a triumphant glance. Their plans were working even better than they had hoped.

"What is to be done?" exclaimed Eveleen, in feigned distress. "Of course it will not do to leave her in that way. Justina—Justina—do you hear me?"

"Yes."

"Will you not go home like a good girl for the sake of your father?"

"No, ma'am."

"Dear me—what a naughty child! Justina, are you listening?"

"Yes, ma'am."

"Come and get into the carriage, and you shall go with me. I really cannot leave you here in that way."

With one bound the child reached the side of the carriage and looked eagerly into her face.

"To England, Mrs. De Courcey? Will you really take me there?"

"Yes—anywhere—anywhere," said Eveleen, who began to grow nervous at their long delay. With a low cry of joy, Justina sprang into the carriage and established herself beside her benefactress, as she called her in her heart. Her little gray cloak fell from her shoulders, at the feet of the lawyer, as she sprang in before him. He picked it up and was about to restore it to her, when a sudden thought seemed to strike him, and going through the underbrush, he rubbed it in the mud and sand beside the pond, and left it there. It was a time for the ghost of the murdered man to rise up, and confront a villain in the midst of his guilt, but the dark waters lay dead and still, and nothing broke the silence but the melancholy hooting of an owl, in the depths of the forest beyond.

He came slowly back to the carriage. Mrs. De Courcey fixed her eyes upon him, as he entered.

"I have only been fixing a wrong track," he said, with a sardonic smile, and she ordered the coachman to drive on at his greatest speed.

In the excitement of the moment Justina had almost forgotten her home, and her kind foster-father and mother. But as she grew quiet, and found herself whirled along so rapidly, while each moment increased the distance between them, she began to weep bitterly."

"What is it?" asked Mrs. De Courcey, gently.

"My father and mother—and my poor dog—dear old Curley!" she answered, through her sobs. "Oh, they will never know what has become of me! Let me go home—oh, let me go home!"

"It is too late now, Justina!" said the lawyer, sternly. "Here—drink this—and you will soon feel better."

He took a small vial from his pocket, and held it to her lips. She did not dare refuse it, and the taste was mild and pleasant. But it was a powerful narcotic, and five minutes after she had swallowed it, her head sank listlessly upon her shoulder, and she was sound asleep.

Meanwhile, as the night gave place to day, and she did not return home, a hundred men and women were searching for her in all directions. At last, when nearly a week had elapsed, the little mantle, soiled and torn, was found beside the Murderer's Pond. There were tears and prayers for the lost one—a funeral sermon was preached, a little grave made in the country church-yard, though no coffin rested there, and Justina's memory was only kept green in two fond hearts—the hearts she had almost broken.

CHAPTER V.

THE BETROTHAL.

On a dull and rainy evening, twelve years after the events described in the last chapter, Mrs. De Courcey sat alone in the boudoir of her house in London. Twelve years had wrought their work. She was beautiful still, but pale and languid, and a confirmed invalid. Physicians had advised change of air and scene, and both had been tried. Both had also failed. She found no relief under the burning sun of Italy, or among the cool chalets of Switzerland, and, worn and weary, she had returned to her native land, to linger out the last days of her life, where English faces might surround her, and English voices be the last that fell upon her deafening ear.

Eveleen De Courcey was evidently ill at ease. The rash act which she had committed twelve years before, had weighed heavily upon her spirits. It had dimmed the full blue eye, and paled the rosy cheek;—it had helped to bow the haughty head, and confine that stately form to the easy chair, in which she always sat.

True, she had committed no actual crime. She had merely taken a child, who had found a place within her heart, from coarse and rude surroundings, and placed her in an elegant home, with every luxury at her command. Of the sun-burned and untaught rustic she had made a beautiful, brilliant, and highly-educated girl. So far, so good. But when she remembered the *motive* which had at first led her on, she despised herself.

For it had not been simply for the good of the child that she had done all this. She had never forgotten or forgiven the indignity put upon her by Justus Erringcourt, in her earlier life. She had wished to meet him once again—to show him his daughter, brilliant, beautiful, and haughty, and when he would clasp her to his heart, and weep tears of joy upon her breast—mock at him savagely, and draw the child away. She had longed to say to him—

"Years ago you wounded my pride, and I swore to be revenged. Here is your daughter—all that heart could wish. But only your child in name. She is mine in spirit, and you cannot tear her from me. And while you go down to your grave, lonely and alone, Justina will care for me and love me in my old age, as if I were indeed what I should have been—her mother!"

I say she *had* longed to say all this to him. But sickness works a wondrous change in us all—and when we see Death, afar off, it is true, but still coming toward us with a stealthy pace, we grow gentle and forgiving, and long to be at peace with the world before we leave it forever. So Eveleen, repenting of what she had done, longed to find her early lover, and restore him the treasure she had kept so long, before she died.

But that was in vain. Justus Erringcourt, after the wildest excesses, had become involved in an affair of honor, and having shot his antagonist through the heart, was obliged to flee to the continent for safety. For ten years he had not been heard of, even by his most intimate associates, and his name was gradually forgotten, as the names of the dead are. In fact, since all traces of him were so completely lost, the gay world was perfectly willing to consider him dead, and lost all recollection of him, with the greatest celerity possible.

Restitution to the father being impossible, it only remained for Eveleen De Courcey to atone to the child. She did this in a liberal, though secret manner, by naming her the sole heiress to her vast property. And in order that she might be prudent in its disposal, and not throw herself or it away upon the first handsome fortune hunter who whispered the language of love and flattery to her, she wished to see her well and happily married before she died.

She was thinking of these things on the evening of which I write. A profound melancholy was impressed upon her slight and aristocratic features, and the glance of her deep blue eyes was wistful and despairing.

She wheeled her easy chair slowly to the window, and lifting the heavy damask curtain, looked out. The night was dull and rainy, and a dense yellow fog, through which the street lamps twinkled faintly, like watchful eyes just closing up in sleep, was spreading over the town. It was a dismal prospect, and she shuddered as she gazed. With a sigh of relief she dropped the curtain, and looked around upon the warm and elegant room in which her daily lot was cast. Then wheeling herself back to her former place, she took a small silver bell from the table beside her, and rung it loudly. A grave and stately looking serving man, dressed in a livery of gray, edged with silver, presented himself.

"Andrew," said his mistress, without looking up, "tell Miss Justina that I should like to see her immediately."

The servant bowed and retired. Left to herself, Mrs. De Courcey struck her transparent hand impatiently upon the table.

"I wish I had some one to advise me now,"—she said aloud—"I wish Mr. Skelligg had not thought proper to take a fever and die."

"Why, my dear mamma, what a strange idea!" said a low-toned and most musical voice. She turned her head, and saw her adopted daughter standing near her.

Justina De Courcey, as she had always been called, since her departure from her village home, was now nearly twenty years of age. She had inherited her mother's peculiar stature—her figure, too, was the same, in its uprightness and willowy grace. There was a look of both parents in her face. She had a high broad forehead, shaded by masses of straight black hair, as soft and beautiful as floss silk. Her complexion was perfectly colorless, and of that soft creamy hue and richness, so rarely seen except in our own sunny south, among the most beautiful creoles. Her mouth was small, full, and beautifully shaped. The lips, of a pale coral tint, were slightly compressed, as if in pride and decision—yet they often parted in hearty peals of laughter, disclosing the beautifully white and even teeth that sparkled behind them. Her eyes were the eyes of Justus Erringcourt—large, soft, and of that clear dark gray, which, when fringed with heavy black lashes, melt and sparkle as no other eyes can do. Never was a face so made up of contradictions. Her mouth, arch and lovely as it was, betokened a nature fully alive to mirth and pleasure, while her eyes, like two deep and silent wells, seemed the very home of tears. And over all her charming face, an indescribable expression of melancholy and pride was thrown, like a veil, making the riddle still harder to be solved.

We must not forget her dress—for this was an index of her strange character. A closely fitting habit of gray, trimmed with black velvet, and a flowing skirt of the same material, suited well with her peculiar complexion. A vandyke collar of rich and delicate lace, was fastened with a knot of deep crimson ribbon. A diamond cross, of great value, sparkled on her breast; and the wide, loose sleeve of her habit displayed a hand aristocratically small and slender, on the third finger of which, glittered an opal ring. But for the jewels her dress would have been almost nun-like in its simplicity, and yet it became her so well, that, having once seen her thus, one would scarcely care to see her otherwise.

Mrs. De Courcey looked at her with a saddened eye, as she bent over her, laughing gaily at the remark she had unconsciously made.

"I was wrong, Justina," she said, gravely. "Mr. Skelligg was a trustworthy and excellent person, and I feel his value more now that he is dead. Especially do I miss him to-night—I want to consult with him, on very important business."

"Consult with me," said Justina, carelessly, walking up and down the room.

"It was about you that I wished advice," said Mrs. De Courcey quickly.

The young girl paused a moment, and looked at her searchingly before she resumed her walk.

"Yes; it was about you. How do you like London, my dear?" she added abruptly.

Justina went to the window, and looking out upon the dreary scene, shrugged her shoulders, and answered—

"I know very little of London as yet, my dear mother. To look from our drawing-room windows upon this quiet square, or to walk demurely up and down yonder little park, at stated seasons of the day, is not by any means to see London. Show it to me; and then I can better tell you how I like it."

"What do you mean?"

"Let me see the city as it is. Let me go out into its rush and roar—let me see its people, its business, and its pleasure. I am dying by inches, mother, in this dull house, and through this dull way of living."

"Justina!"

"It is true, mother, and if I have never said it before, it is not, by any means, because I have not felt it. I am losing all my life and energy here. Do you remember Sterne's starling that cried through his cage 'I can't get out?' I was reading it to you the other day. Well, mother, I am like the poor starling—I am caged up from life and light and air, and can no more set myself free than he could."

She sat down, and laid her head upon her folded arms, with a weary sigh; Mrs De Courcey looked at her with an affectionate and anxious air.

"Justina," she said, at last, "I am an invalid and cannot even leave my room. A young girl like you, cannot go out, in this great city, alone, and I know only one who could chaperone you."

"And who is that?" asked Justina eagerly.

"A lady of whom you have often heard me speak—Mrs. Ernstein, the friend of my girlhood. She will be here this evening. But before she comes—Justina, how would you like to marry?"

"Mother!"

"There—don't, my child!" said Mrs. De Courcey, using her salts nervously. "Don't get up a scene. I implore you, but answer my question."

"I should like it above all things in the world, my dear mother," said the girl, gravely. "That is, if my husband were young, handsome, agreeable and rich—not else."

"He is all these, my daughter."

"How? Have you already selected him, mother?"

"Yes. Draw your chair here beside mine, and listen to me."

Justina did as she was desired, and waited with a look of blank amazement for her mother to go on.

"You are young and beautiful, Justina—of course you know this already."

"The eyes of the young girl dropped, and a slight smile played around her mouth.

"And you are like a caged bird here," continued her mother, "and beat your wings continually against the bars of your prison. Your early New England training has done this. You had so full a taste of liberty in your childhood, that you cannot understand or bear confinement now."

Justina sighed, as she remembered that early home, and answered gloomily—

"You are quite right, mother."

"I cannot, of course, expect to keep you always beside me," continued her mother. "The young bird would fly from the parent nest, but oh my child, if you love me, let not that flight be taken alone."

"Why not, mother?" was the impatient reply.

"If you knew the world—the great cruel world, my darling, you would not ask me."

"Is the world then, so vast and wicked?" and a dreamy look dawned in the soft gray eyes. "Sometimes I sit in my room and wonder what the world can be, mother. It seems to me like an Arabian Night's tale—full of light and splendor."

"And so it is," said Mrs. De Courcey, bitterly. "But the splendor is hollow, and the lights are false. There are aching hearts, and sin and shame and misery on every side, Justina—but the eyes of careless gazers only see the gilded robe that covers all."

There was a long silence in the room. The girl was dreaming her own bright dreams of the future, regardless of those warning words, and the woman was looking back upon the withered flowers and blighted fruits of love, that were strewed along the path by which she had come through life. A sigh escaped her lips, as she looked down upon Justina's thoughtful face. Even so, had her father sat at her feet, and looked into her very soul with his beautiful eyes. Her voice softened unconsciously when she spoke to her again.

"Let that pass, Justina. It is very evident that you must have a guide through this labarynth, into which you are about to throw yourself. Will you accept the one I offer you?"

The young girl looked up with the air of one who had been awakened from a delightful dream, and said briefly:

"Who is it?"

"Alfred Ernstein, the only son and heir of Mrs. Ernstein, the lady of whom I spoke to you."

Justina blushed deeply.

"I cannot tell, mother—I have never seen him."

"Oh, you will like him—never fear."

"But he may not like me, mother."

"Silly child—he already loves you. He has seen you often, and it is by his request that I am speaking to you now."

Justina buried her face in her hands. It seemed so strange and sweet, that any one could love her without her knowledge.

As she sat there, a carriage drove up to the door, and the hall bell rang sharply. She started to her feet, pale and frightened.

"It is they," said Mrs. De Courcey, listening anxiously. "Run to your room my child, and put on your prettiest dress—you must look as well as you can. And mind now, no silly vagaries. You must either meet Alfred Ernstein as your future husband, or, by your manner, reject him at once. There is no time to be lost in idle courtship. He loves you and wishes to marry you—if, when you see him, you think you can love him, say so frankly. And now hurry to your room, my darling, and call your maid. And do not be long—for the evening is already far advanced."

Justina listened for a moment, with her head bent down like a startled deer, and hearing footsteps on the stairs, fled away to her own room. Scarcely had the door closed behind her, when the grave servant announced Mrs. Ernstein and Mr. Alfred Ernstein.

Mrs. Ernstein was a pretty little fashionable lady, with the brightest brown eyes, and the glossiest chestnut curls imaginable. It had been years since the two friends had met, but time and change had not affected her, and she fluttered up to Eveleen, with both hands extended, as airily and gracefully, as if she had still been a girl of sixteen.

"My dear Eveleen," she cried, kissing her affectionately, and shedding a tear or two, "I cannot tell you how verry sorry I am to see you here. But we will not be sad—we will hope for the best, dear friend, and trust that in a little while you will get back your truant roses."

"Ah, Margaret, I have said farewell to them forever," said Mrs. De Courcey with a melancholy smile. And holding out her delicate hand to the young man who stood watching the meeting, she said gravely:

"And this is Alfred."

He came forward, and bent above her hand with a grace peculiarly his own. She eyed him sadly.

"How time flies, Margaret. When last I saw him, he was a mere schoolboy—and now—"

"Oh, now, although he is a man in stature, he is only a schoolboy at heart, my dear Eveleen," said his lively little mother, standing on tiptoe by his side, and trying hard to disguise the love and pride that beamed from her brown eyes, every time she looked at him.

Well might she rejoice in him. At twenty-two, Alfred Ernstein had left college, taking the highest honors, and the love and respect of all who knew him. Well born, well educated, graceful and polished in his manners, and elegant in his appearance, he was all her heart could wish.

His features resembled hers in the delicacy and purity of their outline. But his forehead was bold and high, and shaded by silky masses of fair hair—his eyes were large and dark, with a grave and searching glance—his mouth was sweet and melancholy in its expression, and his whole aspect gracious and noble. A luxuriant moustache and beard of the same blonde hue as his hair, gave character to the lower part of his face, but almost concealed the rounded and exquisitely moulded chin. His stature was almost remarkable, and his figure full of strength and grace.

It was not wonderful to see how much his mother loved him—but it was beautiful to see the look that passed between them, and the grave sweet smile that played around his lips as he met her eyes.

"Yes," said Mrs. Ernstein, shrugging her pretty shoulders saucily, "you don't know what a trial it is to have such a great tall son, Eveleen. How can I flirt with any one, or pass myself off as a young woman, with him beside me."

"Hush, mamma," said Alfred, bringing her a chair into which she nestled like a bird—"you forget that we are here on very serious business, and that our time is short. May we hope to see Miss De Courcey?" he added, turning to her mother, whose eyes were still fixed upon him steadily.

Even as he spoke, the servant threw open the door and Justina entered. Her usual simple dress was thrown aside, and in her evening dress of pearl-colored satin, with diamonds sparkling on her neck and arms, and in her jetty hair, she looked like a young empress.

Mrs. De Courcey leaned forward in her chair as she approached, and took her hand in hers.

"Justina—my friend, Mrs. Ernstein," she said, in an agitated voice.

The girl bent her stately head, and the little lady kissed her warmly.

"And here," added Mrs. De Courcey, her voice trembling still more, "here—this is no time for ceremony—oh, my child, I can only hope—"

She sank back in her chair and wept. For the first time, Justina raised her eyes, and looked steadily at Alfred Ernstein who stood before her.

Well was it for him that his life had been so pure! Not many men could have met that grave inquiring glance so steadily! But as she looked, the pure instinct of the young maiden told her that there was one who well deserved her—one, who like Nathaniel of old, was altogether "without guile." She read in that brave free glance, of temptation resisted, and evil overcome, and felt her heart drawn towards him.

"Justina, my darling," said Mrs. De Courcey, "come nearer to me."

The girl leaned over her mother's chair.

"You have been a good and dutiful child to me, though no drop of my blood flows in your veins. But here is one who loves you—who will devote his life to your happiness. Can you learn to love him, my child?"

"He is a good and noble boy, my dear," said Mrs. Ernstein, fondly and proudly. "He has never pained his mother's heart—I know he will never pain yours, Justina."

"Hear *me*, one moment," said Alfred, coming forward. "Miss De Courcey—although this seems but a formal wooing, my love is as fervent—my heart will be as true—as if I multiplied words with you. Let my life prove my sincerity. And as I deal with you—so may the God who watches over you, deal with me."

Justina stood resolute.

"I am under no constraint?" she asked at last, looking towards her mother. "I may act of my own free will in this matter?"

"My child—the happiness of your life depends upon your decision, and can you think I would influence you now?" asked Mrs. De Courcey, with deep emotion.

"The happiness of my life!" repeated Justina. "It is a solemn thought—and yet—strange to say, I feel no fear. It is one of the sweetest moments of my life."

She turned with a bright smile, which could not be mistaken, to Alfred Ernstein.

"May I hope?" he asked in a low eager voice.

Without a word she placed her hand in his. She heard a smothering exclamation of joy fall from her mother's lips, and saw that long fair hair fall upon her arm, as with tears in his eyes, he bent to kiss her hand—the rest was all lost in a tumultuous whirl of emotion that left her giddy and almost blind.

And so Justina's future was decided.

CHAPTER VI.

AN IMPORTANT INTERVIEW

During the next day, Justina was left entirely to her own reflections. The agitation of the preceding evening had been too great for Mrs. De Courcey, who spent a very restless night, and slept late on the following morning.

Justina sat down to the solitary breakfast table and tried to eat. But coffee, eggs, and toast went away untasted; and even the Morning Post, over whose columns she usually pored by the hour, fell listlessly from her hand, as she leaned back in her arm-chair, and closed her eyes.

The handsome face and princely form of her betrothed husband, were ever present before her. There was something so strange, so sweet, in this hasty wooing, that she could not but choose to dwell upon it—to recall every look and word of the brief interview—to feel again that tear and kiss upon her hand. She blushed as she thought of that, and lifted her hand to her lips.

The servant entered, with double gravity in his looks, and placed a beautiful bouquet of hot-house flowers upon the table before her. She leant over them with a low cry of delight, and inhaled their fragrance.

"Where did you get them, Andrew?" she said, looking up with a bright smile.

"A servant left them at the door," was the sententious answer.

"And they are for me?"

"They were left for Miss De Courcey."

"With any message?"

"None, Miss Justina."

"And this servant—whose livery did he wear?" she asked, without looking up.

"The livery of Mrs. Ernstein, Miss Justina."

"That will do, Andrew." And with a face radiant with delight, the young girl bounded from the room, with her flowers in her hand.

She went to her own chamber. The house belonging to Mrs. De Courcey, though in a gravely respectable part of the city, had been built for many years. Everything about it was substantial, grand, and at the same time, comfortable. The apartment chosen by Justina as her own, was large and low, with lozenge-shaped windows set in leaden frames. To see out of them, she was obliged to climb into the high window seat, and nestle down at her ease—but this she liked right well, and many of her happiest hours had been spent there. The furniture of the room was dark, and old, and massive. A great fire-place opposite the door, served to warm, and often at evening, to light the room, for Justina loved to sit in her great arm-chair and watch the blaze flickering up, and then dying away, as the wind shook the casements, and crept, in gusty sighs, behind the faded and worm-eaten tapestry that still hung upon the wall. Her piano, and her library were at one end of the room—a great bed, with curtains of royal purple, stood at the other. Justina often laughed at this clumsy couch, and declared the whole household might occupy it—yet she loved it, and would not give it up for one of more modern construction. A round table of mahogany was drawn near the fire—an easy chair stood beside it, and the table was covered with books, papers, and writing and drawing materials. On a little seat, at a little distance, was a half-finished portrait of Mrs. De Courcey—for Justina, with all her other gifts, was an amateur artist, and really painted very well. Several heavy claw-footed chairs—a wardrobe of oak, and a small organ, completed the list of furniture, if we except a beautiful gray and black kitten, with a morocco collar around its neck, that slept luxuriously on a cushion before the fire.

The young girl threw herself down into the easy chair, and placing the flowers upon the table before her, leaned her cheek upon her hand, and fell into a reverie. The kitten aroused by her entrance, yawned, stretched itself, and then walked deliberately towards her, and rubbed her smooth sides against her dress. Finding no response to her mute greeting, she opened her round eyes in apparent astonishment—then springing lightly upon the table, she sniffed a moment disdainfully at the bouquet, and with one touch of her paw, sent it to the floor.

"You naughty thing—did you guess what I was thinking of?" said Justina as she picked it up, and laid it carefully beyond her spoiled favorite's reach. "Did you know that the giver of the flowers had usurped your place in my thoughts, and revenge yourself accordingly. Oh, Malta—Malta—I am afraid I am making a sad dunce of myself—I am afraid I had best content myself with you."

She placed the kitten upon her shoulder, in which elevated position she closed her eyes, and purred in a sleepy sing-song kind of way, while her mistress walked up and down the long apartment with her arms folded, and her brow knit, as if, for the first time, she regretted what she had done.

She sat down at last, to the organ, and played the evening hymn to the Virgin. But music had lost its charms, and turning away with an impatient sigh, she took her brush and began to paint. The pencil dropped from her hand, ere a moment passed, and the portrait was as far from completion as ever.

"I can do nothing but think," she said, sadly. "And yet, how strange. Yesterday at this time, I was quiet and contented here. I read, and played, and sung. I frolicked with Malta, and painted enthusiastically, and cared for nothing beyond the four walls. Can it be that the sight of a face—one glance from those eyes, and one kiss from those lips upon my hand, has worked so great a change in me? Am I in love?"

She stood still a moment in the middle of the floor, smiling gravely to herself, as if amused at the idea. Then going to her bookcase, she took down a gilded and embossed volume, and turned over its leaves.

"Let us see what this author says of love;" and she read aloud as follows:

> "Marguerite felt that to her new life and energy had been given. For St. Aubyn she could dare all—renounce all. With him by her side, she could have been happy in a mean cottage upon a lonely moor—she could have performed the humblest offices with her own fair hands, and counted herself blest in serving him."

She closed the book with an emphatic snap, and replaced it upon the shelf.

"What nonsense! Or, if that is a true definition of love, I am very sure I do not feel it yet. I could not be happy in a mean cottage—I could not perform the humblest offices with my own fair hands, and be satisfied."

She shook her head as she looked at her jewelled fingers, and went on—

"No, I am persuaded I should find the cottage a bore—and as for life and energy—I had it yesterday, but I have it not to-day."

A new thought struck her. She leaned back in her chair and sighed.

"And yet, this man, with his beauty, his grace, and goodness, is to be my husband. I must love him, then. And surely I ought to for all those things. If the world is so wicked a place, as my mother assures me, and its people are so false and vile, ought I not to be thankful that the man they have selected for my companion is so far above them? I will—I do love him!"

A sharp knock came at the door as she made this confession.

"Come in," she said, hastily, and her maid entered, out of breath through the rapidity with which she had ascended the grand staircase.

"Oh, if you please, my lady, my mistress says you are to dress at once, and go down into the drawing room. He is waiting there."

"Who?"

The girl held up a small plain card. Justina took it and read the name—

"Alfred Ernstein."

"Very well," she said, mechanically, and surrendering herself to the quick hands of Lisbeth, she did not speak again till her toilet was completed. As she went down the stairs, she entered her mother's room. Mrs. De Courcey unclosed her eyes, and smiled approvingly as she stood beside her.

"You have chosen a very becoming dress, my child. Now go—but do not stay long, and when your conversation is over, come back and tell me all about it."

"Mother, am I to meet him alone?"

"He has requested it; he has, of course, many things to say to you which he could not say before me. Why do you not go? There is no impropriety in it."

"But my heart beats so, and I am so much afraid—"

"Nonsense—do not be foolish, Justina. Go on, and then return to me."

She did as she was bid. And going down into the drawing-room, she saw Alfred Ernstein leaning over the centre table, and looking at a volume of poems. He came eagerly forward to meet her, and kissing her hand, led her to a seat.

"I hope you are not sorry to see me here so early, Justina," he said, kindly.

"Mr. Ernstein knows that he must always be welcome in this house," said Justina, with evident constraint.

"Nay, do not be so distant," he replied, sitting down beside her. "We are soon to be one—let us talk frankly and freely with one another, and drop all these formalities, which only mean that we are ill at ease in each other's society. Do you agree to this, my fairy?"

"Oh, yes," said Justina, looking up with a sparkling glance at the pretty pet name. But she grew confused again, as she saw those grave, handsome eyes regarding her so searchingly.

"How long have you known me, Justina—that is, how long is it since your mother first told you of me?" he asked suddenly.

"Not long—not much more than twelve hours."

He looked surprised and answered:

"You little know how sweetly and unconsciously you flatter me, by this sudden choice. But I have known you longer. It is now three months since I saw you first."

"And when was that?" she asked with interest.

"In your morning walk around the park. I fell in love with your form and step, Justina, before I had ever seen your face."

"But where were you?"

"I had just come up from college. You know, of course, that my mother is a widow, and resides upon her estate in Dorsetshire."

Justina looked up into his face, with a charming and mischievous smile.

"No—I did not even know you had been in college."

"What can you mean?"

"Simply this. My mother called me into her room last evening, and told me she wished me to marry—that she had selected a husband for me, and that he would soon be there. While we were talking about it you came. I went to my room and came down, determined to be rebellious, and refuse you. When I saw you——"

"Well, what then?" asked Alfred, after a long, serious pause.

"I grew very obedient, on the instant, and thought I would please my mother in all things," she answered archly.

"Little flatterer!" he said fondly. "But since you know so little of the man you are about to marry, shall I tell you something of him?"

"If you please," and she settled herself in an easy attitude, and fixed her eyes upon his face.

"To begin then. I am the only son—the only child my mother ever had. My father was a well-to-do gentleman, who died about six weeks after I was born, leaving me the master of a fine estate in Dorsetshire, before I was out of my long frocks. I always lived on the family estate with my mother, till I was sent away to school. Since then, I have only made her flying visits as my duties allowed me to. At school and in college, I believe I was considered one of the most quiet, studious fellows ever seen. Indeed, I never knew what it was to feel a deep, absorbing interest in anything except my books and my mother, till I saw you."

"And that was——"

"Three months ago, as I said before. I used to follow you around like your shadow. Sometimes you walked—sometimes you rode—sometimes you sat upon a bench and read. But I was always near you, and always unnoticed. Once I opened the park gate for you."

"I remember the circumstance," said Justina quickly—"but it was an old man, with white hair, and a white beard."

"Exactly so—and if you had seen him in his lodgings half an hour later, you would have thought him astonishingly like me," said Alfred, glancing at her with a mischievous air.

"Is it really possible that——"

"That I disguised myself in order to be near you? Oh, yes. I was capable of doing much more than that, believe me. I knew that, as an old man, I might be often near you, without alarming you in the least—when, if I had gone in my own proper person, you would probably have deserted the park altogether."

"Well—what did you do next?"

"I wrote to my mother, describing the state I was in. I seem to have made so touching a story of it, that all her maternal fears were at once aroused, and she hurried up to London at once, to see, as she expressed it in her letter to me, what artful woman had got me in her toils. But when she found you were the Dalilah who had captured her Sampson—how she laughed!"

"And then?"

"Justina, what a pretty way you have of saying that! Did you know it? If ever I refuse to tell you anything after we are married, put on that look and tone, and I shall be helpless in your hands."

"Don't stop to compliment me, but go on," she answered, laughing and blushing.

"Well,—and then, my mother and yours commenced a correspondence across this little park. The matter was easily arranged, and we presented ourselves at the specified time—my mother to greet the friend she had not seen for several years, and I to find my bride—Justina," he added, in a voice of deep feeling, drawing her nearer to him, and taking her hand in his.

The consciousness of his deep love for her, and her ignorance of all worldly forms and customs, gave a mischievous frankness to her air, which was deeply and dangerously fascinating to a quiet and reserved man like him. Now she looked up in his face, and said, playfully:

"Since you have found her, don't look so serious, but tell me about your home."

"It is an old, old house, Justina, with four square turrets, overgrown with ivy. There are dark old rooms, and family portraits, and long galleries, and great halls. How should you like such a place, Justina?"

The girl's eyes sparkled.

"Oh, above all things! I have always loved old places like that; and I remember crying bitterly, when I was twelve years old, because my mother, when we were travelling in France, would not leave me in an old, ruinous chateau we visited, and go on without me."

"Then you think you can be happy with me in my quiet country seat?"

The words she had read in her chamber that morning flashed across Justina's mind, and she seemed to see "the humble cottage on a lonely moor," at which she had smiled so contemptuously. But with those proud, dark eyes fixed on her so eagerly, she could not be as cold or calm as she had been then; and yielding to the sweet intoxication of the moment, she murmured—

"Always—anywhere with you."

A flush of pleasure covered the handsome face of her lover. Flattery is always dangerous coming from lips we love.

"Tell me, Justina," he said suddenly—"what made you decide at once, when you met me?"

"Was it wrong—was it unmaidenly?" asked the young girl, blushing painfully. "I couldn't help it—something seemed to tell me at once that you were good, and worthy of my love."

"You were not wrong, my precious one," said Ernstein with deep emotion. "Justina, I have kept myself unspotted from the world, for this very hour. Thank God! I can look into your pure eyes without shame or fear. I can hold you in my arms thus—I can press my lips to yours—for no other head has ever lain here—no other lips have met mine, save my mother's."

"He drew her to his breast as he spoke, and pressed his lips to her's. It was like an electric shock. Both hearts seemed suddenly to leap into life and light, through the magic of that kiss, young, ardent, and deeply loving—the rapture of years was in that one brief moment.

"Do you love me?" he whispered.

Justina raised her head—their eyes met, and the truth flashed into either soul.

"Yes, I love you—I love you," she said hurriedly. And then, as if startled by the confession he had won from her, she added,

"Leave me now," and gliding from his arms, went towards the door.

She saw him looking after her, with a regretful glance.

"Come this evening," she said—"my mother will then be well enough to receive you." And throwing him a kiss from the tips of her taper fingers, she hurried to her mother's room.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NENT.]

ALL'S WELL THAT ENDS WELL.

BY OLIVER SINCLAIR.

A friend of mine was married to a scold—
To me he came, and all his troubles told.
Said he, "She's like a woman raving mad!"
"Alas!" said I, "my friend, that's very bad."
"No, not so bad," said he, "for with her, true,
I had both house, and land, and money too."
"That was well," said I.
"No, not so well," said he;
"For I and her own brother
Went to law with one another
I was beat, the suit was lost,
And every penny went to pay the cost."
"That *was* bad," said I.
"No, not so bad," said he;
"For we agreed that he the house should keep,
And give to me four score merino sheep.
All fat, and fair, and fine they were to be."
"Well then," said I, "sure that was well for thee."
"No, not so well," said he;
"For when the sheep I got,
They ev'ry one died of the rot."
"That was bad," said I.
"No, not so bad," said he;
"For I had thought to scrape the fat,
And keep it in an oaken vat,
Then into tallow melt for winter store."
"Why then," said I, "that's better than before."
"No, not so well," said he;
"For having got a clumsy fellow
To scrape the fat and make the tallow,
Into the melting fat the fire catches,
And, like brimstone matches,
Burnt my house to ashes."
"That *was* bad," said I.
"No, not so bad," said he;
"For, what is best,
My scolding wife is gone among the rest."

THE ROMAN; LOVERS.

When one of the worst men (the emperor Nero) that ever lived in the world had the highest station in it, human life was the object of his diversion; and he sent orders frequently, out of mere wantonness, to take off such and such, without so much as being angry with them. Nay, frequently, his tyranny was so humorous, that he put men to death because he could not but approve of them. It came one day to his ear, that a certain married couple, Pætus and Arria, lived in a more happy tranquility and mutual love than any other persons who were then in being. He listened with great attention to the account of their manner of spending their time together, of the constant pleasure they were to each other in all their words and actions; and found by exact information, that they were so treasonable as to be much more happy than his imperial majesty himself. Upon which he writ Pætus the following billet:

> "Pætus, you are hereby desired to despatch yourself. I have heard a very good character of you; and therefore leave it to yourself, whether you will die by dagger, sword, or poison. If you outlive this order above an hour, I have given directions to put you to death by torture. NERO."

This familiar epistle was delivered to his wife Arria, who opened it. Long she stood in an agony of alternate rage and love; but at last composed herself for her dissolution, rather than survive her beloved Pætus. When he came into her presence, he found her with the tyrant's letter in one hand, and a dagger in the other. Upon his approach to her, she gave him the order: and at the same time stabbing herself, "Pætus," says she, "it is not painsul;" and expired. Pætus immediately followed her example. The passion of these memorable lovers was such, that it illuded the rigor of their fortune, and baffled the force of a blow, which neither felt, because each received it for the sake of the other. The woman's part in this story is much the more heroic, and has occasioned one of the best epigrams transmitted to us from antiquity.

* * *

DISSECTIONS IN TURKEY.—The Sultan is stated to have promulgated an order, that the bodies of female slaves who die in the market shall be given up by their owners to the students in medicine for dissection.

THE NATURE AND ORIGIN OF LOVE.

It is certain, there is no other passion which produces such contrary effects in so great a degree as love. The poets, the moralists, the painters, have represented it as a soft torment, a bitter sweet, a pleasing pain, or an agreeable distress; and have only expressed the same thought in a different manner. But this may be said for love, that if you strike it out of the soul, life would be insipid, and our being but half-animated. Human nature would sink into deadness and lethargy, if not quickened with some active principle; and, as for all others, whether ambition, envy, or avarice, which are apt to possess the mind in the absence of this passion, it must be allowed that they have greater pains, without the compensation of such exquisite pleasures as those we find in love. The great skill is to heighten the satisfactions, and deaden the sorrows of it; which has been the end of many of our labors, and shall continue to be so, for the service of the world in general, and in particular of the fair sex, who are always the best or the worst part of it. It is pity that a passion, which has in it a capacity of making life happy, should not be cultivated to the utmost advantage. Reason, prudence, and good-nature, rightly applied, can thoroughly accomplish this great end, provided they have always a real and constant love to work upon. We shall conclude this reflection on the pains and pleasures which attend this passion, with one of the finest allegories which we have ever read. It is invented by the divine Plato, and, to show the opinion he himself had of it, ascribed by him to his admired Socrates, whom he represents as discoursing with his friends, and giving the history of Love in the following manner:

"At the birth of Beauty," says he, "there was a great feast made, and many guests invited. Among the rest, was the god Plenty, who was the son of the goddess Prudence, and inherited many of his mother's virtues. After a full entertainment, he retired into the garden of Jupiter, which was hung with a great variety of ambrosial fruits, and seems to have been a very proper retreat for such a guest. In the mean time, an unhappy female called Poverty, having heard of this great feast, repaired to it in hopes of finding relief. The first place she lights upon was Jupiter's garden, which generally stands open to people of all conditions. Poverty enters, and by chance finds the god Plenty asleep in it. She was immediately struck with his charms, and effected a union with him, which promised to be fruitful. The world was very much in suspense upon the occasion, and could not imagine to themselves what would be the nature of an infant that was to have its original from two such parents. At the last, the child appears; and who should it be but Love. This infant grew up, and proved in all his behavior what he really was—a compound of opposite beings. As he is the son of Plenty, who was the offspring of Prudence, he is subtile, intriguing, full of stratagems and devices; as the son of Poverty, he is fawning, begging, serenading, delighting to lie at a threshold, or beneath a window. By the father, he is audacious, full of hopes, conscious of merit, and therefore quick of resentment. By the mother, he is doubtful, timorous, mean-spirited, fearful of offending, and abject in submission. In the same hour you may see him transported with raptures, talking of immortal pleasures, and appearing satisfied as a god; and immediately after, as the mortal mother prevails in his composition, you behold him pining, languishing, despairing, dying."

HOME TEACHING.

Schools are most proper for training the youthful mind; neither boys nor girls are ever so well educated at home by governesses and tutors, as in public or private seminaries, where emulation is aroused, and intercourse with minds of various degrees of calibre adds strength and keenness to the intellectual powers, and prepares them for contest in the larger and more active arena of life. But with this public training, home education should go hand in hand. Beneath the parental roof is the most kindly soil for the cultivation of those heart-virtues, amenities and sweet charities, the observance of which renders life pleasant and happy, the neglect of them, the reverse. Unhappy those who cannot recal such education from the earliest dawn of their recollection. Commenced in the daily attentions and tender admonitions of a mother—in a sister's gentle smile and friendly companionship—in a brother's ready help and fond protection—in the ramble with a father through pleasant green lanes, or shady forest paths, where are birds and wild flowers, with the tiny grasshopper, "the gold green beetle," the humming bee, and all the myriad insects seen on a summer's day;—in the tale read and commented on, by the winter's fire-side—in the visit to the sick and humble neighbor, and the united prayer offered up at morn and eve. Such teaching, when joined with the unvarying regularity and sterner discipline of school duties, will train the youthful mind for its best and noblest purposes. Nor is such education ever forgotten, for it is twined with the heart's deepest, holiest memories, and the youth thus brought up may be fearlessly dismissed on the rough journey of life, with every prospect of achieving an honorable and useful existence.

But wo unto those who think that in providing competent instructors for their children, they fulfil their duty—who are so occupied by the demands of business, fashion, or pleasure, as to have no time left for home teaching or home enjoyments. Bitter are the fruits yet in store for them. Immortal souls confided to their charge, have grown up in ignorance of the great end of their being, and unfitted for the practical duties of life. Needed counsel has been held back; errors and failings past by unreproved; evil tempers and passions permitted to remain unchecked. Is it then astonishing that despite almost fabulous sums lavished on their education, the daughters of such parents should become vain, heartless and frivolous women, and their sons bad and cruel men? C. B.

SOCIAL LIFE.

It is only in society that the powers and faculties of man arrive at perfection; and from society arise the sweetest and most fascinating pleasures which can soothe the cares and enhance the enjoyments of humanity. How delicious and interesting it is for rational beings to live and converse with, and move among, those who participate in the same nature, and are inspired with the same sentiments, affections and hopes. Let us then observe the best means by which the order and tranquillity of social life are preserved, and the progress of civilization and refinement promoted and quickened. With the improvement of society is combined the improvement of man in a point of view, at once religious, moral, and intellectual.

* * *

A TEETOTALLER, the other day asked a neighbor if he were not inclining to the Temperance Society, and he replied, "Yes; for when he saw liquor *his mouth watered.*"

LET IT ALONE.

BY AN OLD AUTHOR.

Though the bowl and the bumper
With spirit be filled ;
Though the nectar, like Jove's,
Be ambrosia distilled ;
Though wit, song, and laughter
Lend joys of their own ;
Take counsel from caution
And let them alone :
Let them alone.
Take counsel from caution
And let them alone !

If a friend have a scheme
That she shows, very clear,
Will bring you two thousand,
Or upward, a year ;—
Though it seems like a fortune
To other hands thrown,
Take counsel from caution
And let it alone ;—
Let it alone.
Take counsel from caution
And let it alone !

The fountain of fortune
But slenderly flows ;
Wealth, got in a moment,
As suddenly goes !—
And Wine's giddy laughter,
'Tis easily shown,
Brings sorrow hereafter—
So let it alone ;
Let it alone.
Brings sorrow hereafter,
So let it alone !

JOHN BOGGS' BARN-DOOR ;

OR,

THE EFFECTS OF PROCRASTINATION.

BY SYLVANUS COBB, JR.

"It's too bad!" said John Boggs.

"What's too bad?" returned Matilda, his wife.

"Why—the cart's broken down ; and now all hands must be idle while it's being mended."

"The cart?" repeated Mrs. Boggs, laying down the stocking she was darning, and regarding her husband with a peculiar look. "Do you mean the large ox-cart?"

"Yes."

"What's the matter with it?"

"The hub is split right slap in two halves!"

"But I thought that began to split a long time ago. I heard you say, last week, that you must have a new iron band made for it."

"Yes—I know," said John Boggs, rather dubiously ; "I did say something about it, but teen I didn't think 'twas so bad."

"Yet you knew it needed mending, John ; for you said so yourself. I wish you *would* learn to be more prompt about these things. You lose more than you are aware of."

"O, no, Tiddy. I don't lose anything. Everything on my place is as well as things generally are."

"Not quite, John. I know you manage to keep things in pretty good order ; but you must acknowledge that you are in the habit of procrastinating. It's only last week that you lost a valuable sheep just because you put off mending the floor in the shed. And now you have lost half-a-day's work of three hands just because you didn't mend your cart-hub when it ought to have been mended. Ah—you do lose much ; and there's no use in trying to hide it."

"Well—complaining wont mend it—that's a sure case," muttered John.

"No," quickly, but pleasantly, retorted Matilda ; "but paying heed to your experience might mend the whole trouble."

"Pooh! You sit here in the house darnin' stockin's ; and I s'pose you think, 'cause you can see where to run your needle, you could see everything in a farm at once."

"No, no, John," said the wife, smiling. "You don't put it in the right shape. I *can* see the heel of a stocking ; and when I see a place where my needle needs to run, I run it there. I don't expect you to see but one thing at a time ; but when you do see that thing, and also see that it needs mending, then is the time to mend it."

John Boggs commenced to whistle a medley of spasmodic notes, and at the same time drew on his coat. He had got to go five miles to a blacksmith's to have an iron ring made.

"John," said his wife, plying her darning-needle as she spoke, "now mark my words : If you don't turn over a new leaf in this respect, you'll have a lesson one of these days that'll cost you more than you can afford to pay."

John whistled with renewed energy, now striking fairly into "Yankee Doodle," and with a dubious shake of the head, his wife turned her attention to her work.

John Boggs had two men at work for him, and by this breaking of the cart they were obliged to either lie still, or go at some work which was of little use. He had a large farm, and an excellent one for producing vegetation ; and he was quite "well to do" in the world. His children were all daughters, and hence the business of overlooking the affairs of the farm all devolved upon him.

As we have seen, John Boggs had one fault. He would put off till to-morrow what could be, and should be, done to-day. He contrived to keep his place looking neat and tidy, because at certain periods he would be seized with a sort of renovating fit, and would then roll up his sleeves and go at it. But this didn't work always. Many a time very important things were left till he "*felt like it.*" That was a great expression of his : "Well—*when I feel like it.*" Sometimes there would be a break-down that had to be attended to immediately ; and while he had the hammer and nails in his hands he would fix up several other things that had been awaiting his coming. Very often an hour was required over something which would not have consumed five minutes of his time, had he taken it in hand when he first discovered it. And not only so, but he lost in two other ways : It required more nails to do the work at this late hour, and could never be made so good, at that, as it was before, nor as it would have been had it been attended to in season.

John had often promised his wife that he would reform, but he had not done it yet. He did not realize how much he lost ; or, if he did, the effect was but momentary. When he lost his sheep he felt sorry, and resolved that he would never let such a thing go again. And yet there was at this very moment a bad place in the floor of the tie-up, where the cows were kept. He had noticed it three days before. He saw one of the cows tread upon it, and he knew that a heavy ox would break through there at once. But the floor was not mended yet, for all that.

When the ring, or hub-band, came home, Mr. Boggs went at work to put it on. But it would not work. He had missed a figure in his calculations. The spokes had worn the sockets so much that all the strops in the world could never fit that broken hub on again.

"Jerusalem!" muttered the disappointed man, as he found that he could not make the thing work, "if I had only fixed the thunderin' thing when I'd ought to, this wouldn't have been! It's too bad—too thunderin' bad!"

But there was no help for it. A new hub must be made. He managed to find an old wheel which he could use while the wright was fixing his, and in this uncomfortable way he managed to get along without losing much over a day's time.

One morning, about a week after the breaking of the hub, one of the little girls came running in while the family were at breakfast.

"Papa! papa!—the white-face heifer's broke right through the floor!"

"What?" uttered Boggs, starting up. "Broken through?"

"Yes—right through where you said some of 'em 'ud be breakin' through if they wa'n't careful!"

John Boggs knew that his wife was looking sharply at him, and he avoided the peculiar glance which he felt sure he should find there if he turned that way. He called up the two men and hurried out. As good fortune would have it the heifer was not seriously harmed ; but John knew that he could claim no credit for her safety. When he came back his wife said not a word upon the subject. At first John was afraid she would reprimand him ; but when he found that she kept silent upon the subject, he felt worse than he would have felt had she just chided him a little. He knew she felt it—that she understood it—and her continued silence seemed to indicate that she considered him incorrigible. From that moment he resolved that he *would* reform. Ah—he had made just such resolutions before.

For two months no real accident happened, for John Boggs kept things pretty straight. But still there were some short-comings. The habit of procrastination was too firmly fixed upon him to be easily thrown off.

As Autumn drew near John Boggs began to look around for an opportunity to carry into execution a plan he had been considering for some time. He had a very choice stock of cattle, and having received an excellent offer for them, he concluded to sell them, as he knew where he could buy in the Spring to good advantage. So he sold eight oxen for a price which might by some be considered almost fabulous. The same purchaser wanted horses, and John sold his three heavy ones, keeping only a three-year-old colt, which he thought would answer for all his riding through the winter.

Very near John's farm was a large tract of land covered with heavy pine trees—most of them magnificent white pines ; and he had partly contracted to cut those trees down, fashion the logs, and haul them a distance of three miles to the river. The contract would be a valuable one for him, because he lived so near to the wood. He supposed he could find plenty of men who would be glad to come on and furnish teams if he would keep them. He had hay and grain in plenty, and of course wished to have most of it eaten up on the place. By selling his oxen and horses he had made a clear profit of about one-half of all he got for them ; and now if he could get some one to come on and furnish teams, and in return take one-half the proceeds of the job, and have their animals kept, he would do well. But he found it more difficult than he had expected, to obtain the help. He could find plenty of men who would gladly come with such teams as they owned ; but he wanted heavier ones.

At length he hit upon the very man.

"I've found him," he said to his wife, one evening, on his return from a visit to a neighboring town. "I've found just the man. He's got team enough, and will come on as soon as wanted."

"Who is he?" asked Matilda, quite pleased with her husband's success.

"Aaron Rolf. You know him, don't ye? He's got six stout yoke of oxen, and four good horses ; and he says if I'll give him equal shares of what I am to have, and take care of his animals and men, he'll come."

"Aaron Rolf?" repeated the wife. "I know him well. If he says he will come, then you may depend upon him. He never makes a promise until he *knows* he can keep it ; and he never undertakes to do a thing which he cannot do as it should be done. Some people call him odd ; and I don't know but that he is, in one sense of the word ; for he minds his own business ; *does* his own business ; has everything in its proper place ; and will have no one about him, if he can help it, who will not follow his example."

"Why—you seem to know him well, Tiddy."

"And why shouldn't I? You forget that I lived in his father's family several years."

"Oho! Is he a son of old Ben Rolf?"

"Yes—his eldest boy."

"Aha—that's it, eh? Well, I'm glad he's such a man. It'll make it good for me."

"I should like to have him here very well this coming fall and winter,—that is, if you must have some one."

So John Boggs gave himself no more uneasiness upon the subject of the Fall's work. Mr. Rolf was coming over to look at the timber before he closed the bargain ; but then John had explained everything fully to him, and he was perfectly satisfied.

One day John went to tie his colt up in the stall, and he found that the edge of the trough was worn almost down to the hole through which the halter was tied. He knew that it was not safe. A slight pull would break it out.

"I declare," he said to himself, "I must fix that when I get time."

He meant *when he felt like it*, for he had ample time then. All that was necessary was to step to the wagon-house, get an inch-and-a-half auger, and bore a new hole. It would have taken him, perhaps, five minutes to have performed the whole operation. He led the colt into the next stall, and then went to the house and sat down.

Ah—the old habit was not gone yet. He would fix the tie-hole *when he had time!* John Boggs hadn't quite reformed, for all his place looked so well outside.

An evening or two afterwards, just as he was sitting down to supper, one of his daughters came in and told him that the back barn-door had tumbled down again.

"Why—I set a log of wood up against it firmly only a little while ago," explained John.

"Then I guess some of the sheep must have rubbed it down," said the girl.

"John Boggs," spoke his wife, almost sternly, "haven't you fixed that door yet?"

"I declare, I'll fix that to-morrow," was John's response.

"But why haven't you fixed it before?" persisted Matilda.

"Why—I haven't had time."

John held down his head as he made this remark.

"Haven't had time?" repeated the dame, elevating her eye-brows in real astonishment. "John Boggs, what do you mean?"

"Why—I did mean to fix it ; but whenever I've thought of it, it has been when I was busy about something else."

"Ah, John—let me tell you that kind of work wont suit Aaron Rolf."

"Let Aaron Rolf mind his own business," returned John, warmly ; "and," he added, with a bold look into his wife's face, "there's other folks, too, that might do the same to advantage."

Matilda Boggs smiled, for she saw that her husband was playing the brave—a thing which he seldom did in her presence. Not that she was the wearer of garments unmentionable, but she was one of those straightforward, sound-sensed, stern-virtued women, who find it absolutely necessary to *guide* an easy husband sometimes. She had intended to ask her lord to go out and fix the door after supper ; but as he was already chafed, she concluded to say no more at present.

The facts about that barn-door were these : The lower hinge had been useless over two weeks, but had been made to work by being careful in opening and closing the door. But some three days had elapsed since the upper one became so loose that no dependence could be placed upon it. John had noticed it, and he had said to himself, "It *must* be fixed ;" and he had resolved to do it when —*he felt like it.*

The next day came ; and in the morning John Boggs went out to the barn, and passed through into the yard. He set the back-door up after him, and braced the stout cord-stick against it to hold it in its place.

"I declare, that must be fixed! I'll attend to that right off."

He went out into the field, and when he came back he went over to a neighbor's to see about some help, and remained there till dinner-time. Just as they were sitting down to dinner, Aaron Rolf drove up to the door. One of the hired men took his horse, and he came in, where he was welcomed warmly by John and his good wife.

In the afternoon the two men went out to the timber-land ; and it was nearly dark when they returned. They had seen the whole lot, and Mr. Rolf was much pleased with the proposed plan in every way. As near as they could calculate, it would take them, with themselves and four other men, and six yokes of oxen and four horses, a hundred days. Perhaps more, but surely no less. Rolf found that his share of the proceeds would amount to eight hundred dollars. Then from this he must pay the two men whom he was to bring on, leaving him six hundred dollars for his oxen, horses, and self. But as he would be at no expense at all in feeding anybody or anything, he considered the remuneration just fair.

"I can have more than that for hauling goods for our new railroad company," he said ; "but I should have to be away from home all the time, and I don't like it. I like this plan. I can go home as often as I please, and feel perfectly free to remain away a day if I wish."

During the evening the work was all planned ; and before they retired, Aaron Rolf had about made up his mind that he should sign the articles of agreement. It was arranged that they should go to the justice's and have them legally drawn up. John Boggs thought there was no need of any such paper ; but Mr. Rolf thought differently. Said he—

"We may forget, but a written paper can't forget."

And upon that they retired for the night.

In the morning Mr. Rolf got up, and went out to snuff up the fresh air. Having washed, and combed his hair, he thought he would go down and look at his horse, and perhaps give him some water. He saw one of the hired men, and asked him if he had watered the animal. It had not been done. So he went on to the barn. He found the stable where he had seen the man hitch his horse the night before—but the horse was gone! He went through to the back of the barn, and found the door not only open, but flat upon the ground! He went out into the yard—and there he found the front bars down! He hunted up the hired man.

"Look ye, my man, have you seen anything of my horse?" he asked.

"No, sir," was the answer.

"Just come here."

The man followed Rolf to the empty stall.

"Did you hitch my horse there last night?" the visitor asked, pointing to where the hole had broken out.

"Yes, sir," the fellow said.

"Didn't you know that wouldn't hold a horse?"

"I supposed Mr. Boggs had fixed it, sir. I heard him say two or three days ago he must do it when he had time. It was kind o' dark when I hitched the horse, and I didn't notice."

"Fix it when he had time!" repeated Rolf, in surprise. "Hasn't he an auger?"

"Yes, sir."

"And hasn't he had five minutes to spare within three days?"

"Yes, sir—a good many of 'em, I should think."

"But how about this door out here?—didn't you know that was unsafe?"

"Yes, sir. It's been so a long while. But Mr. Boggs said he'd fix it when he had time, and so I never touched it."

"Who lugged that great log of wood around here to hold it up with?"

"Mr. Boggs did, sir."

"He did, eh?—yes, yes. And now how do you suppose those bars came down?"

"Bars?" repeated the man, somewhat startled : "Are them bars down agin?"

"They're down now, sir."

"Well—I'm glad on't! Mr. Boggs said he'd fix 'em yesterday. They only wanted some pins in 'em. I asked him yesterday mornin' if I shouldn't fix 'em, and he said no. He said I might go to work, and he'd attend to that. Now the cows are all gone!"

"Ah—I understand," said Mr. Rolf. And as he spoke he turned away and followed the track of his horse to the road, and saw that it was turned towards home. He knew the nature of his horse, and was sure he should find him in his own stall. So he returned to the barn ; and having taken the bridle on his arm, and thrown the light saddle over his shoulder, he said to the hired man :

"You can tell Mr. Boggs that I've gone after my horse."

"But shan't I go with ye, sir?"

"No. I know just where I shall find him."

So Aaron Rolf went away "all saddled and bridled."

When Mr. John Boggs came in to breakfast he looked very "blue."

"Why—what's the matter, John?" the wife asked, eagerly, for he looked really sad.

He made no answer ; and Matilda was upon the point of asking again, when one of the rosy-cheeked little girls came running in, with eagerness upon every rounded feature.

"Oh, mamma!" she cried, "don't you think—Mr. Rolf's horse has run off! He broke out of the stall where the halter-hole was clean worn off down to e'ena'most nothing!—and he run out through the barn-door what was all tumbled down!—and he got through the bars where the cows hook 'em down!—and—*don't* you think—he's run right off home! And Mr. Rolf has gone off to try to catch him! He went with the saddle on his back! My sakes—aint it too bad!"

Matilda Boggs looked at John Boggs a full minute, and then went on with her breakfast. She spoke not a word further on the subject.

The next forenoon there was a letter left at the house for John Boggs. That individual received it from his wife when he came in to dinner. He had been fixing up a door, and some bars, etc. He opened the letter, and read as follows :

> "*Oak Hill, Sept.* 23, 18—.
>
> "MR. JOHN BOGGS.—*Dear Sir* :—You may consider that all business relations between us are at an end. But I will not thus abruptly break off our plans without giving you my reason. It is this : I am by nature very nervous, and I could not entrust my interests in the hands of a man who cannot take care of his own. Were I not assured that the accident of last night was the result of what has become a confirmed habit with you, I might hesitate ; but I understand it all. This will remain a secret with me ; and trusting that we may remain friends, and that you may overcome an evil which cannot but result in great harm to you if followed up, I remain, Yours, etc., AARON ROLF."

John Boggs read this letter, and then threw it upon the table and rushed from the house. Matilda picked it up and read it. A cloud passed over her face, and then a ray of sunshine came. In a few moments she looked happy and contented.

But the dinner was getting cold, and she sent one of the children after him. He came in, looking sad and dejected. His wife went up to him, and placed her hand upon his shoulder.

"John," she said, kindly, "cannot you buy some oxen?"

"Yes," he returned, moodily.

"And can you not buy them and still have much of the money left which you received for those you sold?"

"Yes."

"Then go and buy oxen, and hire your men, and do that work yourself. I'll do all I can towards taking care of your hands. And I am sure you'll make much more than you would to have a partner. Come—we can do our duty without the help of any man who does not want to assist you."

John Boggs was at first dumb with grateful emotion. He understood his wife perfectly. He knew how noble she was ; and he now realized that if he had only given heed to her advice before, he might have been spared this shame. But he soon gazed up ; and his only answer was to draw the faithful woman down and kiss her.

That very afternoon he commenced upon a rule of life from which he firmly resolved not to deviate. He posted off at once, and before night he was the owner of eight yokes of oxen. They were not such beauties as those he had sold, but they were stout working-oxen. Next he engaged his men. And when the season for work commenced he went at it with a will. The logs were all cut and deposited in the river, and he was the clear, net gainer of one thousand dollars by the operation.

But that was not all he gained from that fallen barn-door. He gained the life-lesson he so much needed ; and from the rule it gave him he never after deviated. He never again saw a thing upon his place that needed attention without bestowing that attention at once. And the result was soon manifest. Everything was in its place, and everything was safe. His wife was happy, for she had no more occasion to perform that most unpleasant of all domestic duties to the true wife—the chiding of a husband. And there was one more thing : He could put a friend's horse into his stall without the least danger of the animal's making off during the night, through a hole that should have been, but was not, stopped by a barn-door!

UNCLE JO.

BY ALICE CARY.

And who is Uncle Jo? I imagine my reader inquiring, and who cares anything about him, at any rate? Why nobody cares about him, my good friend, and as to your first question, I am afraid I shall not be able to answer it very satisfactorily. I really don't know who he was, nor what he was. I have seen his apparition going about many a time years ago, when I lived in the country, and was too young and careless to think who or what he was. All I ever saw and knew, however, I am quite willing to communicate. He seemed to me a very old man when I first saw him, though I think now he could not have been more than forty at that time—his face was colorless and wrinkled, his hair thin and turning gray, and he walked with a cane, and bent forward after the manner of a man of sixty or seventy. His dress was extremely homespun and careless, adding to, rather than lessening the effect of his years. I never knew any variation of his costume, which was as follows :—A white hat of the fashion of a previous generation, a brown cloth coat, with cuffs and collar of brown velvet, trowsers of the same brown material, as was also his waistcoat. These articles were all greatly too large, as if he had shrunk and withered out of them. He was in the habit of carrying in his hat a great colored silk handkerchief, with one corner dropping over his left eye. His eyes were large and blue, and had an anxious and melancholy expression, as if they searched for something they never found—I think now they did. His walking-stick was made of a hoop-pole, with a notch cut around the top for the purpose of keeping in its place a twisted tow-string, all the ornament it had—all the ornament, indeed, appertaining to Uncle Jo, in any way. His trade was that of a cooper, and shop and dwelling were all one—he slept on the shavings at night, and burnt them in the morning to boil his tea-kettle—there was always a great pile of them on the sunny side of his house, and Sundays he used to sit there and read the Bible. He did not go to church—it was tacitly understood that he *could* not go—his coat was brown, and blue coats were the fashion—his hat was white and high, and low black hats were the style—in truth, he no more expected to go to the church than he looked for the church to come to him. When the meeting-house was painted, Uncle Jo was *offered the privilege* of contributing, and putting his hand deep down into his trowsers' pocket, he fished up a two-dollar note ; and when the belfry was put up, the privilege was repeated, and Uncle Jo availed himself of it to the amount of one dollar. He afterwards gave fifty cents toward the purchase of a new cushion for the Bible, and as much more when carpeting was laid down in the middle aisle. But nobody ever offered him the privilege of a seat in their pew. Uncle Jo did not want to go to church—of course he did not—he was not like anybody else!

I remember one day as I was coming home from a "big meeting," Uncle Jo, who had been all day sitting on the pile of shavings in front of his house enjoying the dust raised by the carriages of the pious people, I suppose, came forward and asked me whether the meetinghouse looked very fine with all its new things, and on my replying in the affirmative, he said in a tone that was altogether devoid of the hope of realizing so great a pleasure—"I should like to get in sometime when there was no meeting and see it, if I could."

I looked at him in blank astonishment that he should indulge such a wish, for never, till then, did I suspect that Uncle Jo desired anything, except to work of week days, and read his Bible Sundays. Every spring he devoted one or two days to picking up the stones and brickbats which rude and careless boys threw into the yard of the meeting-house during the winter—the trees that shaded the windows were of his planting, as were also the white rose-bushes each side of the gate.

It was one of Uncle Jo's privileges to work in the door-yard of the meeting-house every spring. But the work for which he was chiefly known and relied upon was digging graves. If any one fell sick he knew it ; and if any one died in the neighborhood, though it were at midnight, he would be found instinctively sitting on the steps of the house. The services that are required at those sad times none knew how to perform so unobtrusively and so satisfactorily as he. When a funeral was to be made ready for, Uncle Jo was sure to be remembered, if at no other time.

When a grave was to be made, his cane, with all the vanity of its tow-string, was hung against the wall, and Uncle Jo walked with his spade instead of his stick—the brown coat was left behind, too, and his back bent more than common beneath his grubbing-hoe. These were the only seasons when he was brought up to anything like social equality with his neighbors.

If there were a woodchopping, or a frolic of any sort, nobody thought of asking Uncle Jo—chiefly because they had never tried to see beneath his brown coat, and had no idea there was a living, breathing, beating heart there.

I am of opinion now, that for the solemn services in view of which he was tolerated among us, he received no compensation whatever—not so much as a recognition, I am afraid, sometimes ; nevertheless, he was always quietly active till the mould was heaped and smoothly rounded up over the newly buried, but when the preacher came forward to thank the friends, in behalf of the mourners, for their last offices to the dead, Uncle Jo would slip out of the way and out of sight, and nobody think of him at all.

So year after year went by, and so he bent more and more crooked as he walked with his spade to the grave-yard. One bitter-cold winter day, a grave was needed—I forget for whom, and to the surprise of every body, and indignation of some few, Uncle Jo was not forthcoming—at length some one, more kindly or more importunate than the rest, went to his house—no sound of the adz was heard, and no smoke curled from the clay chimney—the long icicles hung down from the windows, and the spade and grubbing-hoe leaned against the wall. The door was opened, and there lay Uncle Jo on his bed of shavings—the Bible beneath his head for a pillow. The visitor bent over him, shook his shoulder, and called him aloud. Alas! thenceforth he could hear no voice but Gabriel's. His house was very open, the cold intense, and so he had frozen to death.

When they buttoned his old brown coat about him, preparatory to placing him in the coffin, they became aware of something underlying it. What was it! a pocket-book, may-be—the old man was rich after all?

Ah, no, it was only a picture, but the picture of a young and beautiful woman, and if Uncle Jo were rich, it was rich in the memory of lost love, rich in the hope of reunion.

They replaced it where they found it, and buried it with him, as they should have done ; and all who heard the story afterward, thought and felt that if he were alive again, they would try to say something to make him happy, they would try to do something to make him comfortable—the old white hat and faded brown coat had been all they had ever seen or ever thought of, and what was working within the one, and what was hoping and fearing, and beating low to the sweet memories under the other, they never suspected.

How little we know what sort of person is living in the apparition we see, as

"Like pilgrims on the hills of life
We cross each other and are gone."

CONDUCT OF LIFE.

It is, as far as it relates to our present being, the great end of education to raise ourselves above the vulgar ; but what is intended by the vulgar, is not, methinks, enough understood. In me, indeed, that word raises a quite different idea from what it usually does in others ; but perhaps that proceeds from my being old, and beginning to want the relish of such satisfactions as are the ordinary entertainment of men. However, such as my opinion is in this case, I will speak it ; because it is possible that turn of thought may be received by others, who may reap as much satisfaction from it as I do myself.

It is to me a very great meanness, and something much below a philosopher, which is what I mean by a gentleman, to rank a man among the vulgar for the condition of life he is in, and not according to his behavior, his thoughts, and sentiments, in that condition. For if a man be loaded with riches and honors, and in that state of life has thoughts and inclinations below the meanest artificer ; is not such an artificer, who, within his power, is good to his friends, moderate in his demands for his labor, and cheerful in his occupation, very much superior to him who lives for no other end but to serve himself, and assumes a preference in all his words and actions to those who act their part with much more grace than himself? Epictetus has made use of the similitude of a stage-play to human life with much spirit. "It is not," says he, "to be considered among the actors who is prince, or who is beggar, but who acts prince or beggar best." The circumstance of life should not be that which gives us place, but our *behavior* in that circumstance is what should be our solid distinction. Thus a wise man should think no man above him or below him, any further than it regards the outward order or discipline of the world : for, if we conceive too great an idea of the eminence of our superiors, or subordination of our inferiors, it will have an ill effect upon our behavior to both. He who thinks no man above him but for his virtue, none below him but for his vice, can never be obsequious or assuming in a wrong place ; but will frequently emulate men in rank below him, and pity those above him.

This sense of mankind is so far from a levelling principle, that it only sets us upon a true basis of distinction, and doubles the merit of such as become their condition. A man in power, who can, without the ordinary prepossessions which stop the way to the true knowledge and service of mankind, overlook the little distinctions of fortune, raise obscure merit, and discountenance successful indesert, has, in the minds of knowing men, the figure of an angel rather than a man ; and is above the rest of men in the highest character he can be, even that of their benefactor. AN OLD MAN.

THE ADVANTAGES OF HAVING ENEMIES.—He that has never known adversity, is but half acquainted with others, or with himself. Constant success shows us but one side of the world. For as it surrounds us with friends who will tell us only our merits, so it silences those enemies from whom alone we can learn our defects.

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In addition to the above unequalled array of distinguished authors, we are favored with occasional contributions from scores of other popular writers, as will be seen by reference to our columns from week to week.

CIVILIZERS.

Whatever tends to avert the attention and interests of men from war, and attract them towards peace, by displaying or developing the greater nobleness and utility of peace pursuits, is a civilizer. War, in all its appliances, is the nurse of brutishness and despotism. Unfortunately, the human race have had most of their great shows in tilts, triumphs and processions, awarded to sword and plume wearers, and have ever been habituated to regard the soldier's life and deeds as most certain of winning the admiration and applause of the world. There is little room for wonder, then, that the battle-field rather than the wheat-field, and the sword rather than the sickle, have been the choice of the ambitious and aspiring. Even woman, so gentle and peaceful in her instincts, where unwarped by glory and falsehood, has smiled her sweetest smiles on the "hero," smeared with the dust and blood of conflict, and, as a mother has taught her son the story of a father's glory; glory won where banners were flying, trumpets pealing, and human hearts wasting their life-streams—brother grappling with brother, and sire with son, with a ferocious courage and joy.

All aback there, on the surface of six thousand years, there is but one picture—carnage and desolation. Castles full of armor and arms, magazines piled with trophies, and cathedral walls hung with banners, grasped from Greek, Roman, Saracen or Saxon. A picture, at which humanity recoils, shuddering—a picture drawn from the slaughter of countless myriads who knew nothing of the quarrels which drank their blood and tears in strange lands, remote from their own hearths and homes. And the priest has sanctified their work—the bard sung pæans to it—the orator spoken its eulogy—woman smiled on it, and history recorded little else on its tablets.

But in the golden light of our age, when human life is counted of some worth, beyond being whipped, chained, and killed for a feudal chief, a despot king, or a tyrant State, priests, poets, orators, women, and even history, grow ashamed of lapping blood as the supreme feast. Honor, greatness and glory, are no longer tenants solely of the camp and the castle, and the sword and plume are only more respectable as play-things and gazing stocks than the fool's cap and bells, because more dangerous in the handling. Their empire is fading out. Man is nobler this day, over half of Christendom, with scythe, or hammer, or axe in hand, doing honest, useful toil, than was ever lawless cavalier, perilling his life for his lady-love, or crusader, rioting around the Holy Sepulchre. The grain-field to-day, ranks before the battle-field, and the builder of steam engines before the forger of Toledo or Damascene blades. Industry and enterprise are taking the palm of courage and valor—the warrior draws nearer to the murderer, and men wonder that man has been such a fool, a slave, and a beast of prey so long.

Human passion, strong and blind, has done its work, and now human reason assumes the sceptre. Invention grows less and less devilish; the useful and beautiful triumph over the destructive and terrible. Every man feels a value in *his own life*, and seeking to preserve and protect that, discovers that his fellow's life is equally valuable to him. So each, for his own sake, learns to respect his fellow—to treat him as would be desirable in return. All see the bloody cheat of a game by which lords and tyrants have used men heretofore. Each step taken to increase the home-comforts, the individual independence, and the general prosperity through peaceful industry, strengthens the empire of peace. Civilization—most perfect wherever man enjoys his natural faculties and powers most, whether in wigwam or palace—blossoms and spreads, and flings a rich odor over the cities, hamlets, fields and shops, where war and strife are held in abomination. There, the white spire, sheltering the blessed altar, points to heaven. There, the smoke rises over happy hearts. There, men salute as brothers, and nature feels and responds to the heart of man, beating at length in unison with her own.

TRUTH.

How beautiful is Truth! In this world, where there is so much falsehood and deceit, whereby hearts are estranged, and recriminations, assaults, and crimes engendered—how beautiful are the true thought, word, and deed. Like the sun smiling out amid the angry storm—like the bright stars shining through the heavy night-cloud—like friend clasping the hand of friend—like right rebutting wrong—like the lance of virtue ringing on the shield of vice—like heaven upon earth, and God in man, is Truth! Precious and priceless. Dearer than [illegible] of friend, love of parent, or pomp, or fame. Truth is all. By this we know the nature and value of things. Falsehood is a craven, a dastard. Truth is bold, noble, and God-given, beyond every other attribute of the human soul.

WHICH ARE RIGHT?

There are those who contend that the human race do not advance in intelligence and enjoyment, while others insist that the world's progress in those directions is too rapid and radical. The history of reform and improvement is everywhere marked by opposite extremes. One class would go to excess in destroying a *present good* before creating a *better*, while the other would cling to the *existing* without hearing an argument in favor of the superior proposed to supersede it. Neither of these classes are the best friends of progress. The pursuits, habits and customs of society, have been created according to the highest idea of the wants and interests of society, so far as its intelligence was developed at the time of their creation. They have answered and still may answer the necessities of society, and are entitled to respect on the score of past benefits and present uses. In this view, society is warranted in a careful conservatism. It is called to protect and defend institutions, inventions and improvements, already proven valuable.

But while defending the existing, society should not reject consideration of whatever promises greater benefit. Mankind, at one period, were content with rude huts, rude implements of labor and warfare, rude facilities for compassing land and water in their travel and commerce, but guided by a wise Providence, they never cast away the surroundings of an inferior condition, until their ideas of a superior condition were crowned by the creation of superior surroundings. In the aggregate, civilization, with every race, has been gradual, and the rude has been moulded into the refined, so imperceptibly that humanity, from savageism to perfect enlightenment, is a full and complete statue, harmonious in proportion, and, without violent breaks, disclosing in its drapery every condition of its life and growth.

Ignorance and misapprehension have done much to retard the civilization and happiness of man, by clinging blindly to the present. The farmer struggled to save his ruder implements from the grasp of science and labor-saving machines. The canvass of the plodding ship flapped hard against the smoke of the innovating steamer, and the scribe book-makers, seeing their craft threatened, denounced types as the devil's invention. The noblest revolutionizers of society, instead of being generously accepted, have often been most bitterly opposed, either by the selfishness of those whose inferior inventions they threatened, or by the prejudice of classes who think that whatever answers a purpose, in any way, is good enough and must be let alone.

But art, science and improvement always triumph in the ultimate, and people wonder when a new thing is established and proved better than the old, why they ever opposed the new. Let any one look upon the transformation of the ways and means of society during his own life, and he will find that the most approved and enjoyed reforms, of whatever nature, have had to fight their way to popular acceptance. Yet who would go back to sloop-riding on the Hudson, though Fulton was called a madman; or to scribe-parchments from newspapers, though printing was first stigmatized as the work of the devil? In this liberal age we judge things less by their antiquity than by their utility. We are afraid of nothing that is "more useful." The new that is proven better than the old, that we accept—thankful to the old for all the service it wrought us. This, we must think, is the true spirit of progress.

WAS MAN MADE TO MOURN?

Solomon taught, and experience confirms, that there is a time to mourn as well as a time to rejoice. But some people really seem to have mistaken their "being's end and aim" so egregiously, as to suppose that mourning was the "chief end of man." At least, their own conduct justifies the suspicion that such is their creed—for they "go mourning all their days," whether there is really anything calling for grief or not. If they have no actual sorrow, they draw upon their imaginations, as an never-failing fountain, and put on "sackcloth and ashes," and go at it with a will. They are, apparently, "bound" to be miserable.

It is scarcely necessary to say that such people have sadly mistaken the purposes and privileges of life. Man was *not* "made to mourn." He was made to be happy. If he is not, the fault will, most generally, be found in himself. Certainly it should not be looked for in the "eternal fitness of things," as an Allwise Providence designs them. The birds, the flowers, the brooks, the breezes—in a word, all nature—invite to pleasurable as well as healthful enjoyment.

Let us, then, no longer practice a fallacy like this. "Life is solemn—life is earnest," but it is not necessarily sad. There is no time for the *mere habit* of mourning!

COURTESY.

Courtesy is a distinguishing feature of civilized and intelligent society. It is the most beautiful illustration of the refining power which a higher development always exerts upon our race. By courtesy, we mean that behavior of man towards man which one would ask for himself. It is but a part of the mode of carrying out the great Christian precept which lies at the base of order and harmony among men: "Do unto others as ye would that others should do unto you." That this precept, which implies courtesy, is divine as is all moral truth, is proven by our common appreciation of its fitness and beauty. Do what we may in life, the wheels of society can never move smoothly and well where the spirit of courtesy does not actuate the deeds and thoughts of man in his intercourse with man. Necessary as it is in civilized society, courtesy has its power among the lowest and most savage. That which leads us to do as we would be done by, especially in the more refined and refining intercourse of our lives, is the conciliating angel which, whatever our condition, and whoever we may be, will powerfully help to guard us against every enmity and assault.

EXPERIMENT.

While there is a want unsatisfied, an evil unrestrained, an aspiration unsated, the harvest-field lies ahead, and advance is the true watchword of the individual, the society, and the government. What though progress beats its way over the thorny path of experiment, is not experiment, sooner or later, the only process by which the world can advance? Have not the diversified forms of civilization all sprung from experiment?—with whatever is beautiful or improved in a transition from savageism to enlightenment. Have not governments, institutions, and religions (or the guardians thereof) been experimenting since the creation of the world? Hence the great truths of science, art, and philosophy, which now irradiate the civilized spaces of earth. Experiment is the touch-stone, which, when thoroughly applied, reduces theory to such practice as it may embrace; brings the ideal to the standard of the real; determining the truth of assertions, and the values of all tangible disputable things.

FRESH FERN LEAVES.

Entered according to Act of Congress in the year 1855, by Robert Bonner, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court for the Southern District of New York.

A HEADACHE.

Now I am in for it, with one of my unappeasable headaches. Don't talk to me of doctors; it is incurable as a love-fit; nothing on earth will stop it; you may put that down in your memorandum-book. Now, I suppose everybody in the house to-day will put on their creakingest shoes; and everybody will go up and down stairs humming all the tunes they ever heard, especially those I most dislike; and I suppose everything that is cooking in the kitchen will boil and stew over, and the odor will come up to me; and I have *such* a nose! And I suppose all the little boys in the neighborhood, bless their little restless souls, will play duetts on tin-pans and tin-kettles; and I suppose everybody who comes into my room to ask me how I do, will squeak that horrid door, and *keep* squeaking it: and I suppose that unhappy dog confined over in that four-square-feet yard, will howl more deliriously than ever; and Mr. Jones's obnoxious blind will flap and bang till I am as crazy as an omnibus-driver who has a baulky horse, and whose passengers are hopping out behind without paying their fare; and I suppose some poor little child will be running under the window every now and then, screaming "Mother," and whenever I hear that I think somebody wants *me*; and I've no doubt there will be "proof" to read to-day, and that that pertinacious and Stentorian rag-man will lumber past on his crazy old cart, and insist on having some of my dry goods; and I feel it in my bones that oysters and oranges, and tape and blacking, and brooms and mats and tin-ware, will settle and congregate on this side-walk, and assert their respective claims to my notice, till the sight of an undertaker would be a positive blessing.

Whack! how my head snaps! Don't tell me any living woman ever had such a headache before—because it will fill me with disgust. What o'clock is it? "Twelve." Merciful man! only twelve o'clock! I thought it was five. How am I to get through the day, I would like to know, for this headache wont let up till sundown; it never does. "Read to me?" What'll you read? "Tom Moore!"—as if I were not sick enough already! Moore! with his nightingales, and bulbuls, and jessamines; and loves and doves, and roses and posies—till the introduction of an uneducated wildcat, or the tearingest kind of a hyena in his everlasting gardens, would be an untold relief. No—I hate Moore. Beside—he is the fellow who said, "when away from the lips that we love, we'll make love to the lips that are near." No wonder he was baptised *more*—carnivorous old profligate.

"Will I have a cup of tea?" No, of course I wont. I'm not an old maid. Tea! I'd like a dose of strychnine. There goes my head again—I should think a string of fire-crackers was fastened to each hair. Now the pain is in my left temple; now it is in my eye-balls; now—oh dear—it is everywhere. Sit down beside me, on the bed—don't jar it; now put your cold hand on my forehead—so—— good gracious! there's a hand-organ! I knew it—the very one I moved here to get rid of. Playing the same old tune, too, composed of three notes; "tweedle—dum—tweedle—dee!"

Now if that organ man would pull each of my finger and toe-nails out by the roots, one by one, I wouldn't object, but that everlasting "tweedle——" oh, dear!—Or if a cat's tail were to be irretrievably shut into yonder door,—or a shirt sleeve should be suddenly and unexpectedly thrown around an old maid's neck in this room, anything—everything but that eternal, die-away "tweedle." What is the use of a city government? What is the use of anything? What is the use of *me*?

Fanny Fern.

FOR BETTER FOR WORSE.

"Nay, prithee, dear Thomas, ne'er rave thus and curse,
Remember, you took me 'for better for worse.'"
"I know it," quoth Thomas, "but then, madam, look you,—
You prove, upon trial, much worse than I took you."

LABOR-SAVING MACHINES.

Whatever invention abridges labor, is naturally regarded in cities, or dense communities where labor is in surplus without machinery, as the enemy of labor; since it deprives the hard worker of employment, and renders the capitalist independent of him. But we must not judge of the economy or beneficence of labor-saving machines by their action upon the worst organized and most artificial positioned city portions—forming a small minority at that—of the working classes. When talent and industry shall be justly distributed, and every one does his fraction of toil, no worker will, of necessity, need to work one-half, nor one-third his present task hours to secure a better subsistence than he now enjoys.

Under such distribution of talent and industry, labor will become capital, simply through intelligent association, and will seize hold of the labor-saving machine, and use it as profitably as the money capitalist does. Then the worker will cease to be the slave of his task, and will make his toil a thing of pleasant and healthful, as well as profitable exercise. The labor-saving machine, which he now looks upon as his enemy, because there is no association of his class by which it can be at once turned to the advantage of labor—will be his best friend, because it will not only arm him to compete more successfully with money,—heretofore the absorber of all labor-saving apparatus—but will reduce the measure and irksomeness of his toil, and increase his leisure, pleasure and profit.

It was a long time after their invention, before the old farmers would touch the iron plough—the side-hill and sub-soil ploughs—the horse-rake, patent threshing machine, corn-sheller, and hundreds of other noble improvements in the farming implement line, and the gravest reason for their stubborn conservatism, was that *they could do all their work in the old way, and these new-fangled machines would deprive them of good hard toil, and make them idlers*. If hard work with head and hands were the only object and pleasure of life, it would be cruel to disturb the race in a slavish toil of from ten to eighteen hours every day. But as having leisure from manual labor does not necessarily imply the idleness of him who has it,—there being many ways for the culture, expansion and good of man, apart from bare earth-grubbing for his bread—the machinery that helps him to such leisure, by abridging his labor, is a blessing. And such, upon any and every thorough investigation of the matter, will be found the aggregate result of labor-saving machines.

Fat People.—Mirabeau said of a man who was exceedingly fat, that God created him only to show to what point the human skin could stretch without breaking.

Difficulty excites the mind to the dignity which sustains and finally conquers misfortune, and the ordeal refines while it chastens.

AN ECHO IN THE HEART.

BY M. W. S. GIBSON.

"And were you to follow the violet veins,
Over the hills to the end of the earth,
Barbara, what would you get for your pains,
More than your true love's love is worth?"
Alice Cary.

Yes, sweetest songstress, those true words will, indeed, find "an echo in the hearts" of many of your readers! I laid the poem silently before my dearest friend to-day. She read it—covered her eyes with her hand, and turned away. A thousand memories of the "true love's love" despised, the love which she sold for rank and gold, long, long ago, were in her mind. I knew it well.

There are many to whom those sad and simple words will come, as a keen reproach. The man of business, as he lays by the daily paper in his office in Wall street, will catch a glimpse at them. He will start and grow pale. The name of "Mary" will pass his lips unconsciously. He will see the fair young girl in all her gladsome beauty and grace, as he saw her years ago, in that pleasant country home of hers. He will hear the fairy like laugh that charmed him then, and little fingers, stained red with strawberries, will be held up playfully for him to kiss. Then he will remember how the soft blue eyes grew dim with watching for him, in vain—and how the sunny head is lying low in that village churchyard, while the pleasant home is desolate. Perhaps the carriage of his haughty wife will roll up to the door, for a moment—but after she has gone, and all through the day, the sweet face of the dead Mary will be with him, and his heart will be weeping tears of blood.

An old man, sitting in his lonely home, will read them, and sigh as he thinks of the young wife who will never sit beside him there again. Only a year—one little year—since they were wed, and now she lies in the family vault—she, in all her youth and loveliness; while he, though full of years, still lingers on. Was it because she loved him not, that she faded away so soon? He thinks, with remorseful tenderness, of the meek eyes that never frowned upon him, and of the pale cheek that grew still paler day by day. Was the struggle between duty and affection, then, so strong—and the "true love's love" so priceless, that she must lie down in the tomb, to hush her sorrow at its loss? The old man would give worlds, if he had them, to bring her back once more, free and happy as when she first dawned upon his sight. Too late! forever too late!

"Barbara, what would you get for your pains,
More than your true love's love is worth?"

Well do I know one who will read those lines with a dumb aching at her heart that can never find vent in words. A woman, young, proud, and influential. To look at her, is like looking at a bright and pleasant summer's day. To hear her careless laugh, would bring a smile to the veriest misanthrope. So much of lightness has her step—so much of spring sunshine have her eyes—such contagious happiness is in her smile—so frank and free and careless is her manner, that one would say, while looking at her—"Ah, there is one who never knew a care!"

Strange, how superficially we judge one another! So thought I, when that bright presence dawned upon me first, and that cheerful voice fell upon my ear. I knew ere long, how much that smiling masked. A line or two about the full passionate mouth—a secret look of pain, passing now and then through the dark handsome eyes, as quickly as a cloud might pass athwart the summer's sky, and last—an awful and passionate burst of grief while I was by, told the whole. How much was lying in that lonely heart, that many thought so cold. The memory of many a broken friendship, and many a lost but unforgotten love—a house deserted, and the loving heart of a kind husband wrung by treachery of the deepest dye—a reckless, truhless betrayal of every soul who trusted her—an utter defiance of all her kind, and a total unbelief in God or Heaven—all these unhappy things were there! They are there still—and there also, are the false, false smiles, that so mislead. But to-morrow, as she reads those beautiful lines, the smiles will go—the proud head will be bowed down in utter agony of spirit, as all her sins rise up in order before her. Oh, would that some one earlier had said to her of that mountain home in which she was reared,

"A world is shut in among those hills—
Stay in it, Barbara, stay for your peace!"

STAGE-STRUCK SIMPLETONS.

We are constantly receiving letters from addlepates of both sexes, asking how the writers shall manage in order to "go upon the stage." They all inform us, with refreshing complacency, that they "have a God-given talent," which is struggling to make itself recognized and themselves famous; that all they need is opportunity to be seen and heard, to be appreciated and applauded. And they all "*love* the stage," too—the feminine addlepates especially. They feel the fires of genius glowing within their breasts, and unless they can be permitted to blaze forth on the stage of some theatre, said fires will consume the bosoms in which they are now so fearfully raging. To all such silly men and women, and boys and girls, of whatever age and condition, we have only a few words to say. In the first place, we are not versed in the means by which histrionic aspirants work their way through the labarynths of the stage to a station behind the footlights; in the second place, if we knew all about it, we would not tell anybody, as we would not want the sin of having aided a young person to begin such a course of life resting upon us. We verily feel that we would sooner see a daughter of ours lying innocent in her coffin, than to see her enter upon a career of theatrical life. Therefore, to all who "feel the fires of genius glowing," &c., we say, set the fires cooking your families' food, or smelting ore, or doing something useful, and only recur to your stage-dream, for the purpose of inducing in your hearts a healthful degree of humility by reminding you what unmitigated fools you once made of yourselves.

Integrity.—The term integrity can only be applied to those persons who, accustomed to practise every part of social justice, are conscientiously accurate in all their dealings, faithful to every trust, tenacious of every promise, disdaining to dissemble or prevaricate, and who would regard every act of injustice as a meanness to which they would scorn to stoop.

Partiality.—If you are under obligations to many, it is prudent to postpone the recompensing of one until it be in your power to remunerate all, otherwise you will make more enemies by what you give than by what you withhold.

A Truism.—Being our own master sometimes means that we are at liberty to be the slave of our own follies, caprices, and passions.

CURRENT ITEMS.

A man named Gold, living in Cincinnati, went to his chest a few mornings since and took therefrom his razor and jack-knife. His wife (who was still in bed) asked what he was going to do with them, to which he replied, "I am going to cut some bread." She thinking from a peculiar fire in his eye that he was under a fit of insanity, sprang from the bed, and rushing up to him, seized his arm just as he was about to cut his throat with the razor. Thereupon he stabbed her in the side with the jack-knife, and also cut her hand with the razor. She then ran into the next room to raise the alarm, but before assistance could be obtained, the wretched man had cut his throat from ear to ear.

Dr. Sumner, of Western New York, has published a statement concerning an extraordinary case of needle-mania which he has been treating for the last two and a-half years. The subject is a girl, who was nineteen years old when he began his treatment in April, 1853. He has extracted from various portions of her arms and body 297 sewing needles, 67 pins, 2 darning needles, 5 hair pins, 5 knitting needles, and five pieces of wire; total, 383 pieces. All of these the girl has thrust into her flesh, while in a sort of somnambulistic state, for which the doctors have as yet no name.

A little girl, five years of age, fell over the balustrades of the stairs in her parents' house, in Clinton Place, a few days since. She was leaning over, with an elder sister, and losing her balance was precipitated below, and her skull fractured. This is the third accident of the kind which has occurred in the city within a week. Parents can never be too careful in securing the safety of young children.

A destructive tornado swept across the Ohio river, a short time since, taking the village of Augusta, on the Kentucky side, in its way, and prostrating everything before it. The water of the river was dashed to an immense height, and the bank on the Kentucky side was broken in a manner which indicated resistless power on the part of the hurricane, which went tearing on its way across the State, probably destroying property of untold value.

A couple of pupils in the Deaf and Dumb Asylum at Raleigh, (N. C.,) named Keek and Harrell, recently got into a quarrel, and exchanged blows. Keek being a powerful young man, dealt Harrell, who was weak and slender, several severe blows which killed him on the spot. But a few moments before this melancholy event, the two pupils were on the most friendly terms.

A Mississippi paper gives an account of a race between a negro girl and an alligator, in which the stake was the girl herself. The alligator, not being able to turn short corners, was baffled by the girl, whose cries at length brought a lot of field hands to her aid, who attacked the monster, and killed him.

It is feared that the "freezing out" of fruit trees (at the roots) in northern Ohio, Indiana and Illinois, and in Michigan and Wisconsin, has been so extensive this season, that it will occasion a severe scarcity of fruit in all those sections.

The inhabitants of Stockholm (Sweden) were astonished, this season, by a December thaw; all the snow disappeared from the hills and all the ice from the harbor—a thing which has not happened before, during a winter month, since the memory of man.

A young man living in Georgia having failed to keep his engagements with a young lady, a friend of the latter challenged him to mortal combat. Weapons rifles; distance fifty paces; result, faithless lover shot through the hips, and dead the next morning.

On the calendar of the March term of the Court of General Sessions of this city, there were one hundred and four criminal cases, seven of which were for murder, including the cases of Eckel and Mrs. Cunningham.

There is a bill now before the New York Legislature which provides that if a husband be a drunkard, a profligate, or has abandoned his wife, she may have a right to her own earnings. Let that bill be passed quickly.

It seems that the English have sadly compromised themselves in their attacks upon the Chinese, and will have to back down. Public opinion is sometimes stronger than mighty armies and numberless ships-of-war.

Boys must not play too roughly. A lad nine years of age, while playing in the Park a few days ago, had his arm broken, above the elbow, by a slight blow with a stick in the hands of a playfellow.

A passenger recently attempted to leap from a train of cars, on the Reading Railroad, and not getting clear, his feet were caught on the track, and both cut off by the car-wheels.

An edition of the New York Ledger, if the papers were laid end to end, would reach over one hundred and eighty miles.

President Pierce is the only President who never made any change in his Cabinet throughout his entire term of office.

It is stated that damage amounting to over six millions of dollars has been done to the railroads of this country by the storms and freshets of the present season.

WIT AND HUMOR.

The celebrated Dr. Abernethy was once consulted by a gentleman whose habits had greatly impaired his digestive powers. After receiving advice, the patient said, "But, sir, what spirits will you recommend me to drink?" Dr. Abernethy, in disgust, replied, "Why, sir, you may take tincture of rhubarb, that is a spirit; or you may take tincture of jalap, that is a spirit; and they have this advantage over other spirits—you may take them into your body yourself, but they will take themselves out of your body as fast as they can."

By an amusing error (of the press of course) which occurred in a late edition of a popular English Grammar, the variations of the verb to chide were given as follows:—Present Infinitive—To chide. Past finite—I chid. Past Infinitive—to have children! A critic accounts for the mistake by stating, that the compositor must have been a bachelor who had recently got married.

Legal Criticism.—Not long ago, an eminent special pleader was at a theatre, seeing the play of Macbeth. In the scene where Macbeth questions the witches in the cavern, "What is't you do?" they answer—"A *deed* without a name." The phrase struck the sagacious lawyer, and he immediately remarked to a friend, "A deed without a name? why 'tis void."

A young musician, remarkable for his modesty and sincerity, on his first appearance before the public, finding he could not give the trills effectively, assured the audience, by way of apology, that he trembled so he couldn't shake.

Antiquity of "Easy Chairs."—The furniture of the ancient Britons was substantial rather than elegant. A round block of wood formed their easiest chair, which, we need hardly say, was easier to make than to sit on.

An exchange paper says that cucumbers can be made into pickles while growing, if you get a cross old maid to look over the fence at the vines three times a week! That editor is an old bachelor, we'll bet a pickle.

A little girl, walking in Greenwood Cemetery, and reading one after another the praises upon the tombstones of those who slept beneath, exclaimed, "I wonder where all the sinners are buried!"

A gentleman of this city, who fancied himself a pendulum, always went upon tick, and did not discover his delusion until he was carefully wound up in the Superior Court.

"Where is your father?" said an angry master to the son of his tippling domestic. "He is down stairs, sir," said the boy. "Getting drunk, I suppose?" "No, sir, he ain't." "What, then?" "Getting sober, sir?"

At a late duel one of the seconds interfered, and proposed that the combatants should shake hands. To this the other appeared to object as unnecessary; "for," said he, "their hands have been shaking this half hour."

A French horse-dealer was asked if an animal which he offered for sale was timid. "Not at all," said he; "he often passes many nights together by himself in the stable."

A Virginia paper describes a fence down there, which is made of such crooked rails, that every time a pig crawls through he comes out on the other side.

An editor received a letter, in which weather was spelt "wethur." He said it was the worst *spell* of weather he had ever seen.

Gratitude.—A man who was rescued from drowning, at Boston, abused the man who rescued him, because he did not save his hat.

Capital Punishment.—"This is what I call capital punishment," as the boy said, when his mother shut him up in the closet among the preserves.

Why is a rejected councillman like a bad key? Because he doesn't suit the ward.

Human heads are like hogsheads; the emptier they are, the louder report they give of themselves.

HOW AND WHERE.

BY ALICE CARY.

How are we living?
Like herbs in a garden, set out in a row,
To eat of the dew and the sunshine to grow,
Our powers of believing
So darkened and dead—
They simply extend to the objects about us,
The mote and the moth that cannot do without us,
The worms in our bed!

If thus we are living,
And fading, and falling, and rotting, alas!—
Like the grass, or the flowers that grow in the grass—
Is life worth our having?
The insect a-humming—
The wild bird is better, that sings as it flies—
The ox, that turns up his great face to the skies,
When the thunder is coming.

Where are we living?
In passion, and pain, and remorse do we dwell—
Creating, yet terribly hating our hell?
No triumph achieving?
No grossness refining?
The wild tree does more—for his coat of rough barks
He trims with green mosses and checks with the marks
Of the long summer shining.

We're dying, not living:
Our senses shut up in a mystical dream,
We're floating, like corpses, adrift in a stream,
Still taking, not giving—
We work not, but wait:
And when we have mired to our loins in the sands,
And feel the rank mildew grow stiff in our hands,
We groan for our fate!

* * *

KARMEL THE SCOUT;

OR,

THE REBEL OF THE JERSEYS.

A STORY OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION.

BY SYLVANUS COBB, JR.,

AUTHOR OF "THE GUNMAKER OF MOSCOW," "THE STORM SECRET," "ORION, THE GOLD-BEATER," ETC., ETC.

Entered according to Act of Congress in the year 1857 by ROBERT BONNER, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court for the Southern District of New York.

CHAPTER XXV.

A NEW PLOT.

Robert Pemberton was not the only one who had seen the scout; nor was he the only one who was suddenly influenced thereby. Sir Arthur Lincoln had also seen him, and the effect upon him was as sudden as it was palpable and strange.

"Who is that?" he quickly and startlingly demanded, as his eye first caught the outlines of the scout's form. "That man just riding up to young Van Ruter's house?"

"That?" returned Elroy, turning and looking in the direction designated. "Why—that is Karmel—the Rebel scout.

"It is!" uttered the baronet. "Yes—it is! Perdition seize him! Why is *he* here?"

"What harm can he do?" asked Elroy, in surprise. "Cannot our officers take him as quickly as any one else?"

"Take him?" said Lincoln, half to himself. "Ah—that isn't the thing. Take him?—By heaven, he must be taken! He shall be taken! Come—we'll think as we go."

Thus speaking the baronet turned towards his own house, and strode off with long, quick, and nervous strides. Elroy could see that he was deeply agitated, and that there was a heavy fear upon him. He wondered at it much, for he could not conceive how the rebel scout could hold any power for evil over the wealthy baronet. However, he followed on after his host, and ere long they were once more in the apartment they had left with so much assurance. Lincoln took a seat, and motioned for his companion to do the same.

"Elroy," he said, seriously and anxiously, "you will ask me no questions, for I can only give you present facts. I cannot meet that man."

"Who?—Karmel?"

"Yes, I cannot meet him. If he remains by the side of your cousin, all is lost. He must be disposed of."

"And how shall we do it?" queried Elroy. "I am ready for anything. By the powers, you shall not find me backward in bringing to—to—death, if you please—those who have cast upon me such wrong and suffering as I have received through the instrumentality of those two men!"

"I knew you would be ready," responded the host. And then, after a few moments of thought, he added, "We can have them removed very easily. Our British friends will be very much gratified to have the opportunity of placing their hands once more upon those two rebels. Next to the chiefest of all rebels—Washington himself—I think they would have Karmel and Robert Pemberton. No two in the Jerseys have done more to cripple the energies of the British; nor do I think there are two others who have done so much. See the damage they have done to the king's cause: They have, to my certain knowledge, betrayed fourteen full companies of good loyalists;—they have taken three very valuable store-ships—store-ships upon the cargoes of which General Howe had placed nearly all his hopes of comfort for his army;—and they have robbed the king's troops of vast amounts of forage and provisions which were almost in hand."

"Aye," returned the young man; "that is indisputable. If there were only British troops here."

"We must have them here?" said the baronet, in a very quiet tone, but yet one of great depth and meaning.

"Have them here?" repeated Elroy, earnestly.

"Yes. Have them here. There are plenty of them only fifteen miles distant. There are three regiments, to my certain knowledge, on the western side of Staten Island; and they can come here and return on the same night. They could come to this place and take their prisoners, and return very easily."

"So they could," returned the young man, upon whose mind the baronet's meaning was beginning to open itself.

"But," added Lincoln, "they must be informed of the presence here of the two Rebels."

"Yes—I understand," said Elroy. "I understand you, sir. I will go at once. I will take one of my father's best horses——"

"There is no need of that," interrupted the baronet; "I have as good a horse as there is in the Jerseys. Take him, and be off at once. It is now," he continued, taking out his watch, and increasing in earnestness, "just six o'clock. You can ride to the kills in two hours, easily; and, if nothing happens to interrupt you, and you find ready means of crossing the kills to the island, you can reach it before dark."

"Let me have the horse, sir!" cried Elroy, starting up from his chair. "I will be off at once. Oh! I did not think of this before! But it will work. Of course they will come."

"The British?"

"Yes."

"Of course they will; and most happy will they be for the opportunity."

"Then let's have the matter arranged at once. Whom shall I ask for there?"

"Major O'Harra is on the island, and he will understand the whole affair. Seek him the first thing, and tell him I send you. Tell him that the two notorious Rebels who escaped him last winter—who shot down one of his officers, and who have done so much mischief—are here, and that, if he will come, he shall surely have them put into his hands."

"But how many men had he better send?"

"Well—tell him that he had better send a full company—say fifty—at least. There may not be needed more than half-a-dozen, and there may be needed more. However, he can judge of that as well as you or I. You can tell him that there are no organized Rebels in this place, so he will have nothing of that kind to fear."

"I understand," replied Elroy. "And now let me have the horse. Oh! come fortune—come luck—come power to stay this cursed plot! If nothing breaks, I'll have them here ere midnight,—and then—farewell to Master Robert Pemberton!"

"Aye—and farewell to Karmel the Scout!" added the baronet. "Ring the bell! ring the bell!"

Elroy gave the bell-cord a nervous jerk, and Thomas himself answered the summons.

"Where is Sultan?" demanded Sir Arthur, hurriedly.

"In the stable, sir."

"Then saddle and bridle him as quickly as possible, and bring him to the door."

Thomas left the room. And then Lincoln asked his young friend if he wished to go home before he started.

"No," he replied: "I should have to pass Van Ruter's house in doing so, and it might excite suspicion. You can drop over after tea, and inform my father where I am."

"I will. Your plan is a good one. If the two Rebels were to see you riding past, and then back again, on my horse, it might, as you say, excite their suspicion. As for supper, you can get that at the camp."

A. BOBBETT—SC.

SIR ARTHUR AND ELROY STARTLED BY AN UNWELCOME APPARITION.

"Never mind supper. If we can have these two men taken care of, I shall be willing to let my suppers take care of themselves for a while."

In a few moments Thomas came with the horse, and Elroy mounted and started off. He reached the kills without trouble, and was fortunate enough to find a man on hand to ferry him across. A Tory farmer close by, where a number of British soldiers were carousing, took charge of his horse, as the boat was not heavy enough to take both man and beast. He was assured that he would find another animal within a very short distance of the opposite shore.

The soldiers came out as he rode up; and when he had explained his business, as far as there was need, some of them offered to accompany him and conduct him direct to Major O'Harra. They crossed the narrow sound; and only a few rods distant they found the place where the soldiers had left their horses, and where a spare one was obtained for Elroy.

There was no danger of meeting any Patriots in that region. A great portion of the soldiers who held Staten Island, and infested the country round about, were Tories; and they, as we have mentioned before, were far more cruel and avaricious than were the British themselves. They had made excursions against the Patriot farmers wherever they could find them, and some of their deeds of cruelty on these occasions almost exceed belief.

It was not fairly dark when Elroy rode up to the house in which he was told the major resided. He leaped from his saddle, and knocked at the door; and the man who answered his summons he at once recognized as the servant of O'Harra.

"Is the major in?" the messenger asked.

"Yes, sir."

"I must see him at once."

"He is engaged now; but will be at leisure in a very few minutes. You can walk in."

Elroy followed the orderly into a small side room, where he was left while the other went for a light. The light was brought, and he was then informed that he should be notified as soon as the major was disengaged.

"Tell him that Elroy Pemberton wishes to see him on business of the utmost importance."

"Yes, sir."

So saying the servant left the room, and Elroy was alone. He was nervous and uneasy, forgetting that the whole night was before him in which to carry out his diabolical plan. He paced to and fro across the apartment—then took a seat—then up and off again—then down, and a book in his hand bottom upwards. But finally the orderly came with the welcome intelligence that the major was ready to see him.

While Elroy Pemberton was holding his interview with Major O'Harra, there transpired a circumstance without, which is worth noticing, not only from its present interest, but from the result which it was destined to help bring forth.

A few moments after the visitor had been conducted to the apartment of the officer a party of British soldiers approached from the west. They were ten in number, and with them were two prisoners. They passed the house of the major, and kept on around a point of low wood, where they came in sight of a little hamlet consisting of half-a-dozen houses; and around were pitched a hundred, or more, large camp-tents, each tent being sufficient in size to accommodate twenty men. Here were encamped quite a body of royal troops.

Near the centre of this hamlet was a two-story building of stone. It had been originally a dwelling house, built by an old Dutch farmer in the time of the second governor of New Amsterdam. It was like many other structures still standing; the walls being formed of stones of all sizes, shapes, and colors, and made solid by a kind of clayey cement. The glazed sashes had been removed from the windows, and stout vertical iron bars let into the masonry. This building was now the prison, and towards it the above-mentioned party made their way.

The two prisoners were brothers; fishermen by occupation; and stern, unyielding patriots. Their names were Mark and Harry Redcliffe; and they were both stout, powerfully built men; their faces were very dark from constant exposure; but noble in their form and features. Mark had seen some forty years of life, while his brother was two years younger. They were secured to their saddles by having their feet bound together under their horses' bellies; and their arms were pinioned behind them, their captors leading the animals.

As they rode up to the prison, the expression which rested upon their faces was almost terrible. It was a deadly expression, full of such hatred and vengeance as no amount of blood can satisfy! Their legs were unbound, and then they were lifted from their saddles.

"Why not cast off those lashings from their arms?" asked one of the prison guard.

"No, no," returned the leader of the party. "By Saint George, we've had trouble enough with them two pair of arms a'ready. Why—I'd as lief let a lion loose as to let one o' them cusses free. Ye've no idee what savages they be."

"Where'd ye find 'em?"

"O—back a piece in Jersey. These are the chaps as killed two of our men last week."

"Oho—be they? Then we'll see 'em swing!"

"I hope so."

The circumstance thus alluded to happened in this way: A party of eight British soldiers had gone out the week before, partly to hunt some forage. On their way they came to a cottage where lived a widow with three sons and two daughters. These daughsers were young and pretty, and the brutes were going to take them off. Mark and Harry Redcliffe, with four others, happened to come up just in season to rescue the maidens; and in doing so they killed two of the soldiers. The girls were saved, but their chief protectors were now in trouble.

"Where's the officer of the guard?" asked the leader of the newly-arrived party.

"I'll go and call him," returned one of the men, and as he spoke he turned away.

In a few moments a lieutenant came out. He came with a strange, unsteady step, and his face wore a grim, idiotic look. The fact was, he had managed to get pretty well drunk.

"Eh?" he gurgled, reeling up and staring about, "got two p-p-pris (hic) z'ners?"

"Yes," answered one of the men. "They are two very dangerous men. We must have them shut up at once."

"At once, *sir!* You'll (hic) say, *sir-r-r* (hic) when you ar-ress *me!* D'yer mind that, ye scapegraces?"

"Certainly, sir," responded the man, respectfully, for it would not answer to show insolence to an official uniform, no matter whether a man or a hog were in it. "In my anxiety, sir, about the prisoners, sir, I forgot to say, *sir*, sir."

"*Sir, sir*, ye blackguard? Look a (hic) here; you take off one o' them *sirs*, or I'll (hic) take your-r hide off, an' be (hic) blessed to ye!"

This officer was a violent, whimsical brute when he was drunk; and not very kind when sober; so the men in the present instance dared not cross him. The most they wanted was to get the two prisoners into a safe place.

"Pardon me, sir. I meant no harm, I assure you."

"O—you did'nt, eh. Well I rather guess you berrer not! But why (hic) do't you bring on yer pris'rers? Where be they?"

"Here, sir. Shall we carry them up?"

"Shall we carry them up?" repeated the lieutenant, with an idiotic leer. "No, sir, *we* wont carry-r 'um up! I'll carry 'um up!"

The officer gazed upon the prisoners as best he could, and then asked how many there were.

"Two of them, sir," was the answer.

"Then (hic) what ye got them other-r chaps for?"

"What others, sir?"

"Why—*them*," said the lieutenant, pointing to the two brothers.

"Those are the two, sir."

The drunken man began to realize that he did not see straight, and finally he bade two of his men to lead the prisoners along. Having given this order he staggered into the prison, and up one flight of stairs.

"Here—stick 'em in here," he cried, stopping before a stout oaken door.

One of the men pushed it open and looked in. The room had been originally a sleeping apartment, and had one window looking to the southward, which was firmly secured by iron bars. In one corner was a heap of common meadow hay, which would not have been there had it been fit for horses to eat. There was nothing of the chair-kind—nothing save the bare walls, floor, ceiling, grated window, and mouldy hay.

The soldiers themselves might not have put the two stout Rebels in that place, for there were stronger cells in the building; but they dared not disobey their superior; so they led the prisoners in, and then asked the officer if they should go and get irons for them.

"Yes," replied the drunken brute, with an oath, "get the heaviest you can find!"

The irons were brought, and put upon the prisoners; the lieutenant went through the motions of inspecting them, giving the Rebels each a slap upon the face as he did so; and then the soldiers withdrew, and the door was shut and securely bolted.

It was night—early night—but the stars shone, and the warm summer atmosphere seemed to have a sort of phosphorescent light in itself. At any rate, the prisoners could see each other as they sat upon the floor, and each saw that the other was stern and sad.

"Mark," spoke the younger brother in a hoarse whisper, "who will bury our father?"

"Bury him?" returned Mark, trembling violently. "Oh, God! what a time is this! Our father dead!—killed by British hirelings!" As he spoke his teeth were ground together with a harsh sound, and his heavy irons clanked again.

"They were Tories who killed our father," said Harry. "Men who were born upon our own soil!"

"I know it," responded Mark. "They were Tories! Oh! Heaven, grant us vengeance! Come here, Harry. Come and sit by my side. We must not talk too loud."

The younger brother started to shuffle across the room, but when he had come near the center a sudden exclamation dropped from his lips, and he stopped.

"What is it?" asked Mark.

"It is an iron ring!" answered the other. "It belongs to a trap-door.—Ha! It is loose!—I can open it! But it is all dark below."

"Shut it, quick!" whispered Mark. "We may make use of it!"

CHAPTER XXVI.

A TRAP.

When Robert and Rosalie reached Van Ruter's house they found Karmel just entering by the back way, he having come from the stable. Our hero related to him what had happened; and Rosalie had also given some explanation.

"Fear not," replied the scout. "They shall not harm you. Trust all to me."

There is always something in the assurance of one whom we respect, that allays fear. No matter how imminent the peril, let an honorable man give positive assurance that he can avert it, and our alarm gives place to a sense of security. Both Robert and Rosalie knew that Karmel would not have given that promise unless he had power to make it good, so they rested their hopes with him, and tried to be happy. They were happy, but not wholly without apprehension.

Andrew and Kate did all in their power to make their guests comfortable; and having waited nearly an hour to see if Lincoln and Elroy would come with official help, as they had expected would be done, they sat down to supper.

Time passed on, but no one appeared to claim the maiden.

"Can it be that they mean to give it up?" queried Robert.

"Do you think Sir Arthur saw me?" asked Karmel.

"He must, I think," Robert said.

"Then he may be waiting in the hope that I may go away. But he will find himself mistaken. I shall see him before I go—you may be sure of that."

"And you are sure all will be safe?" urged Rosalie, earnestly.

"As safe as you could possibly wish, my dear," the old man returned.

The maiden was sitting close by the scout, and as he thus spoke she rested her head upon his shoulder, and one of his arms found its way about her neck. She loved that old man—she could not help it. He was so kind and good; and then he seemed to be the rock of her safety. She felt a perfect confidence in him so far as her reason could influence her; and if she had a misgiving it was the result of emotions over which she had no control.

It was ten o'clock when Robert proposed that they should retire. He and Karmel had had but little sleep of late, and they were much fatigued; and the others were by no means anxious to remain up longer. So Kate led Rosalie away, while her brother took charge of Robert and Karmel, who were to occupy one room.

It was not far from midnight when Andrew Van Ruter heard some one knock at the outer door. He had been awake some moments, and had heard the clock strike twelve. He rose and passed out into the hall, at the end of which was a window directly overlooking the front door. He raised the sash and looked out, and saw a single man upon the steps.

"Who's there?" the gunsmith demanded.

"It's a friend," returned the visitor. "I wish to see Robert Pemberton, and an old patriot scout, called Karmel."

"What do you want of them?"

"I want to see them for their own good. They are in danger; and I have ridden fifteen miles to-night to tell them of it. Let me see them at once."

"Who shall I tell them wishes to see them?"

"They may not know me by name—and yet they may. My name is Van Yorhees. I belong in Amboy."

With this Andrew left the window and went to the room in which he had left his two male guests. He found Robert sitting up in his bed. He could not see his face in the dark, but from the position he judged that the young captain was in a state of intense excitement.

"Who's that?" Robert cried, quickly, and with startling energy.

"It's only Andrew."

"Andrew? Is it you?" the youth faintly uttered, in a sinking tone. "Oh! I am glad. How long have you been here?"

"I have just come. But what is the matter, Robert?" Have you heard anything?"

"Heard anything?" returned our hero, spasmodically. "Oh! my soul, Andrew, such a dream as I have had! All the tortures you ever imagined—all you ever read of—could be as nothing compared with the utter horrors of this night-phantom that has so frightened me. I acknowledge I have been frightened."

"But what was it?"

"I could not tell it as it came to me. I would not, if I could! All the horrors of the fabled Tartarus are as nothing in comparison! But tell me,—did I awake you? Did I cry out?"

"No. I am forgetting there is a man at the door who wishes to see you."

"Ha! At the door? To see me? Is it so?"

"Yes. I heard him knocking, and I went to the window. He is from Amboy, and his name is Van Vorhees."

"So said my dream! There was a man at the door!—he wished to see me!—I went, and I saw him; but instead of a man 'twas a demon of such horrid front that I sank powerless before him! He wished to see *me*. But when I was helpless he found another! He found Rosalie!—and when he had her in his power he—— Oh! Andrew, I cannot tell it!"

At this juncture Karmel awoke. He started up when he saw that Robert was conversing with some one else, and as soon as he recognized Andrew, he asked what had happened.

"There is a man at the door who wishes to see you and Robert," the young host answered. "He says you are in danger; and he has ridden fifteen miles to-night to warn you."

"Ah? Then we must see him," cried Karmel, leaping from the bed. "There may be some piece of villainy cooking up against us of which we have no idea. Who is the man?"

"He says his name is Van Vorhees; and, furthermore, that he came from Amboy."

"O—I know a family of that name there; and they are good patriots, too. Let's go, Robert."

As the scout thus spoke he leaped from the bed, and began to feel around for his clothing.

"Let's have a light, Andrew," he added, as he attempted to draw on his hunting-shirt in place of breeches.

The host left the room at once, and as soon as he was gone Robert spoke. His voice was tremulous still, and his agitation was far from being quelled.

"Karmel—don't laugh at me—but I've had the most terrible dream it was ever my lot to experience. I dreamed first that a man called to see us—just as this one has done; and I went down. I found him a demon—of such horrible form and feature that my blood seemed to curdle, and my heart, to cease its beating. With a power superhuman he deprived me of physical strength, and then left me, to seize upon Rosalie! He found her—he brought her forth—and then a score of other demons like himself made their appearance; and their dreadful work began. I cannot tell you more! Oh! my tongue cannot speak it!"

The scout did not, as many would have done, laugh at his companion. He was sober and thoughtful; and when he spoke his voice plainly indicated that his friend's story had affected him.

"I know how such things can affect the mind," he said, "for I have felt their power. While the reason sleeps these horrid phantoms may so absolutely gain control of the senses as to hold them in torture for some time, yet we have nothing to fear from one man."

"*Fear?*" repeated Robert, quickly. "You do not imagine that the thought has come to me in connexion with myself? Oh, no. It is for another I fear—for another my anxiety holds me back. Oh! how the fond love of a human heart can turn a brave man to a seeming coward!"

"Aye," said the scout, "it sometimes operates so; but oftener it makes a tremulous heart grow strong. Man will often dare for love what he would never dare for self. But I think we will go and——"

He was cut short by the entrance of Andrew, who came in with a lamp in his hand. Both he and Karmel were startled by the pale, haggard look upon Robert's face; but the host was anxious upon another point.

"That man is uneasy," he said. "He is knocking away there, and says he shall go if you do not come soon."

"You say he is alone?" queried Karmel.

"I can see no one else. I have looked all around."

"Well—we'll go down," the old man said. "It may be an honest man, come for an honest purpose. You hold on Robert, I'll go."

"No! no!" cried our hero, leaping from his bed. "Hold on until I get dressed."

"No—I'll run down and see who it is."

"Have you got your pistols?"

"No. I forgot them."

"Then take them; for they can be of no harm, and may be of much real benefit."

Karmel took his pistols, and having placed them in his belt he was about to start again, when Robert hailed him once more.

"Just one minute, Karmel, and I'll be ready to go with you. You see I have but little more to do."

The scout saw that his companion was nearly dressed, so he concluded to wait for him.

This movement served to lift our hero's mind up from the slough into which it had sunk, and if he still had fear, it was far from being as terrible as before, or, at least, it was not so enervating.

In a few moments the young man was ready, and the two left the room. Karmel suggested that they had better go to the window first; so thither they went. The sash was raised, and as the old man put his head out he saw a man standing upon the door-stone.

"Hallo! Who are you?"

"Eh?" uttered the man, looking up. "I should think I'd been here long enough for some of ye to know who I am. I'm Nanny Van Vorhees; and I'm from Amboy; and I've got information that'll be of service to Karmel and Robert Pemberton."

"What is your information?" the scout asked.

"Where are the two men I wish to see?"

"They are here. I am Karmel, and Robert Pemberton is close by. Now what would you tell us?"

"Nothing!" answered the stranger, in seeming disappointment. "The man, or men, who will not trust me, may whistle for their information. If you find yourselves in trouble ere long, you wont blame me."

"Hallo!—hold on!" cried Karmel, as the fellow turned away. "We'll be with you in a moment."

The man stopped, and our two rebels started to go down.

"Hark!" whispered Robert, as they reached the hall. "What was that noise?"

"I heard nothing," returned the other.

They listened a moment, but hearing nothing they kept on. The door was unbolted and unlatched; but no sooner was it started back than some one from without pushed it violently open, and on the next moment the hall was full of armed men! Robert held a pistol in his hand; but ere he could use it he was seized from behind, and thrown upon the floor. Half a dozen small lanterns had suddenly flashed upon the scene; so our rebel friends were easily discovered.

Karmel had been knocked over backwards by the first onset. and before he could gain his feet he was set upon by four stout men and secured. It was while he was being bound that Robert was pulled over; and ere many moments had elapsed he also was securely bound.

At this juncture Andrew Van Ruter rushed into the hall. But what could he do? He saw a score of British soldiers, all armed, and even his two friends beyond the power of helping him or themselves.

"Who are you?" cried one of the soldiers, as the young host made his appearance.

"Who? I am the owner of this house; and these men were my guests. What means this behavior?"

"Shall we take him along?" asked a corporal, pointing to Andrew as he spoke.

"No," returned one who wore a sergeant's uniform. "We have all we were ordered to take; and let's be off with 'em."

It was a moment of strange anguish to Andrew. He felt that his two friends had in a measure sought the protection of his roof; and now he must see them dragged away, before his very face, and he not able to offer the least resistance. At first his impulse had been a pugnacious one; but he thought of Kate and Rosalie—that they would be left defenceless if he were taken away—and he resolved to keep his hands to himself. But it was a severe struggle. He saw his friends carried away; and as they were dragged from his sight a deep sob burst from his bosom.

Karmel and Robert were led around to the end of the house, where they saw more soldiers just leading up the horses from behind ths barn.

"O—here you are," cried the voice which had sounded from the door-stone while Karmel was looking from the window; "here you are," the fellow repeated, gazing first into the face of the scout, and then into the other. "I told ye ye was was in danger. I knew ye was; and ye see I spoke truly."

The prisoners could make no reply to this. They had no desire to bandy words which could be of no use; and when the fellow found that they took no notice of him he turned away. He was the only one not dressed in uniform. His business had been such that his uniform would surely have given the alarm; so he had appeared in a common citizen's garb. He seemed to feel quite funny over the success of his plot, and tried hard to get some retort from the prisoners. And at length he got it. He came near enough for Robert to reach him with his foot, and with one powerful kick the youth sent him at full length upon the ground. The fellow started up and came at a furious pace against our hero, when another well directed kick landed him a second time upon the greensward. He would now have run the prisoner through with a sword which he had caught from a companion, had not some of the others held him back. They laughed at him, and told him he had commenced the quarrel. He turned away with an oath, and contented himself with the idea that he should see the rebel swing!

Two horses were brought from the little barn for the prisoners, one of which proved to be Andrew's. The other was Karmel's. Robert said nothing of the mistake, however, as his own horse was well worn down, but still far superior in point of worth to the one they had brought out. If he never returned, Andrew would have made an excellent exchange.

As quickly as possible the Rebels were mounted—their ankles lashed beneath their horses' bellies, and the order was given for starting. There were two score of the soldiers in all; and half of them rode on ahead, while the remainder rode behind the prisoners.

Just as they started, or rather, as they gained the road, Robert heard a piercing shriek behind him. He turned his head, and could just see a white dress fluttering in the wind upon the door-stone! With a mighty effort he strained the cords that bound him, but without effect; and a moment's reflection told him that he could do nothing. He heard that wild, agonizing cry still piercing through the air; but a few more bounds carried him beyond the scene, and with a low, deep groan his muscles all relaxed, and his heart sank within him like a lump of lead!

"Ha!" whispered Karmel, as they came opposite the dwelling of Sir Arthur Lincoln. "Look there!"

Robert looked, and he saw two human forms at the door.

"The baronet and Elroy!" he said.

"Yes," returned the scout in a meaning tone. "They are looking to see how their plan is working."

"Hallo!" cried one of the soldiers. "None of your talking, there! Keep your tongues still!"

The Rebels said no more; but their thoughts were their own; though it cannot be supposed that such thoughts as would be likely to result from their then present position would have been conducive to much joy. They knew the order that had been promulgated concerning them, and they had no doubt that it would be promptly carried into execution. They knew that even a lieutenant, in command of a station, could have them hung; and they furthermore knew that there was not a lieutenant, nor any other officer of the British army, but that would hang them with a good relish!

Surely that midnight ride could not have been a joyful one!

CHAPTER XXVII.

A STARTLING STORY.—AN INTERRUPTION.

It was just daylight when the party who conducted the two Rebel prisoners reached the lower kills. The ferryman was upon the other side; but the discharge of three muskets started him up, and he soon came over with his boat. The horses were left to be taken over when more help should come, and they could get the larger boat across.

When they reached the stone prison, the sun was well up, and the men were all moving in the camp—all save the lieutenant who had the first guard of the night before. He was still asleep, with a beautiful headache in store.

Karmel and Robert were led into the guard-room, which was the northern room upon the front side, where there were several soldiers and a lieutenant.

"Will you have these men shut up, or will you string 'em up at once?" asked the leader of the party who had captured the two Rebels. He spoke with about the same emotion that might have been manifested by a cook when asking if he should kill a couple of chickens.

"We'll have to shut them up at present," said the officer of the guard. "Major O'Harra must see them, and he wont be here before night, perhaps not until late. He has gone over to the other camp. However, they'll swing in the morning, if not to-night. Not a very pleasing thought, is it?"

This last remark was directed to the prisoners, and was accompanied by a sort of triumphant smile. But they made no reply. The thought that they were to have a day and night to themselves gave them hope, and they were anxious to keep it to themselves.

"Let's have a little examination here," the officer said, before the prisoners were led away: "Have you got any arms concealed about you?" he added, approaching Karmel.

"Only such as God gave me; and they are useless now," the scout replied.

"Concealed weapons, I said, thick-head."

"I have none, sir."

The officer ran his hands over the old man's clothing, and then felt in his pockets, where he found four dollars in silver and five golden guineas.

"You wont have any farther need of these things," he said, as he slipped them into his own pocket. "And now," he added, turning to the younger prisoner, "let's see what you've got."

He first ran his hand over the clothing to see that no weapons were concealed beneath, and then took an excursion into the pockets. In one of them he found a purse, and in the purse were three guineas, beside some silver—two crown pieces, a half-crown, and several shillings.

"You'll feel easier to be rid of this stuff," the lieutenant said, with a smile. "Half the ill-luck in this world can be traced directly to just such property."

"Take them away, and put them into the middle cell. I'll come and see that all is secure."

The prisoners were led from the guard-room out into the hall, and when they stopped it was before a room upon the same floor, not far distant from the one they had just left, but on the opposite side. This door was thrown open, and the Rebels led in. They instinctively cast their eyes about to see what the room contained; but they saw nothing save a bundle of mouldy hay in one corner—that was all.

The door was shut and bolted, and the two men left alone. It was quite dark in there—there being no window, and all the light that could come in was through a little hole over the doorway, which seemed to have been made for ventilation. The place had evidently been built, or partitioned off, for a dark store-room, as it was too small for a sleeping-room, and not light enough for any other purpose. The floor was of smooth stone, and the four walls seemed to be the same.

It was some time after the prisoners were thus left alone before either of them spoke. Each seemed to have thoughts which he would not force upon the other, though they well knew that their thoughts must run in very near the same channel. Robert was the first to speak.

"Ah, Karmel, I had one hope, when I found that we were likely to have a night to ourselves, which has vanished now. You have your little saw, haven't you?"

"Yes. It's safe in my neck-handkerchief."

"So is mine. But we cannot use them. When I saw this prison, and noticed the barred windows, I supposed we might have a chance to try our hand at some of those bars if we had time for it. But fate is against us."

"It is," returned the scout, sadly. "I fear that Arthur Lincoln has circumvented us. It is hard to think that such villainy shall triumph; but so it is likely to prove. They have fairly trapped us."

"And have you imagined how 'twas done?" asked Robert.

"Have you?" said Karmel.

"Yes," returned Robert. "I think Elroy must have ridden off to this place and sent those soldiers after us."

"You are right. It must have been so. When Sir Arthur threatened to have civil officers after you—if he did make that threat——"

"I heard him say to Elroy that they would find civil officers to do the work. And he told me the same. He said he'd soon bring those whom I would not dare to resist."

"That makes it plain to me," returned the scout. "He meant to have employed the civil officers to take his child; but when he saw me he dared not do it. He knew that soldiers could come to New Brunswick in the night and take us if it could be done quietly. I almost think we were blind not to guard against such a trap: A British army only fifteen or twenty miles distant; with no Patriot forces between; and our deadly enemies at both points. We should have thought of it—we should have thought of it."

"It's too late to help it now," responded the youth. "I know we might have thought of it without exercising any great amount of wit, for the thing would have been plain had we turned our attention to it."

"Aye," said Karmel, "'tis too late now; and we may have to give up the race. I can see no hope of escape from here. We can take off our irons, I know, but what can that avail us? Even allowing that we could overcome our attendant, we could not get clear of the building. And yet, we are far from being dead men."

"And while life remains, there is room for hope," added Robert. "If we are left here to-night, and not taken out until to-morrow, we may so fix our irons that we can shake them off at will; and then, when we are led out, we may break away, and——"

"Be shot instead of being hanged," interposed the old man.

"You are right. A rope or a bullet! Alas! poor Rosalie!"

The mention of that name, caused them both the most painful emotions; and Robert thought of his prophetic dream.

The day wore slowly away, but no one came to look in upon the Rebels. They were hungry, but not painfully so. It was thirst that began to oppress them. The day was a warm and sultry one; and within that cell the air was fairly hot and rarified. Had it not been for the little hole over the door, through which the exhausted air partially escaped, they could not have lived there. At noon they were oppressed by a raging thirst; but when the hours passed on and no help came, the thirst became an agony, and was growing more and more intense at every moment.

"*Water! Water! Water!*" yelled the scout, at the top of his voice.

"*Water! Water! Water!*" echoed Robert.

A loud laugh was heard in the distance, and the old scout gnashed his teeth in rage.

"Inhuman monsters!" he hissed between his set teeth. "Oh! God grant that I may be among ye once more with my arms free!"

"*Water! Water! Water!*"

The thirst was terrible. The old man's throat seemed parched, and his tongue on fire. Phantoms of pewter flagons dwelt in his mind; he imagined he could see such vessels before him, with the cold sweat standing upon them, and hear the rattling of ice within, as the beverage was agitatated! He thought of such scenes until he fairly howled with agony!

"Oh! Just Heaven! will they let us die with thirst?"

"I cannot live through the night!" said Robert. "I am burning up! This atmosphere absorbs every particle of moisture from us. My skin is like a hot, dry husk! Will they not have mercy? ——*Water!*—*Water!*—oh—*Water!*"

The afternoon was near its close when the door of the cell was opened, and two men entered. One of them bore a lantern; and the other a common wooden pail.

"There, said the latter," as he set the vessel down, "now drink your fill. You may have water; but you won't need anything to eat. Major O'Harra has just returned, and he will have you both hung in the morning. He heard your yells for water as he stopped at the guard-room, and ordered us to bring some in. I hope ye'll keep quiet now; but if you don't I think we'll find a way to make you do it."

With this gentle admonition the men went out, leaving the prisoners to get at the water as best they could. But they were not long in finding a way to do that. They were bound in the usual way of complete ironing: shackles upon the wrists and ankles, and then a stout chain, two feet long, connecting them, so that a man of ordinary height could not stand erect.

The prisoners both sat down, facing each other; and then Robert lifted the pail to Karmel's lips. Oh! how quickly all other thoughts vanished as the cool nectar rolled over his parched tongue! All fear was gone—death lost its terror—and new life seemed to spring forth from the grateful beverage.

Karmel drank slowly and carefully; and then, in turn, raised the vessel to the lips of his companion. For a wonder the water was pure and cold, having just been drawn from a deep well, and the old man warned our hero against giving away too much to this thirst.

Ere long they felt strong again. Karmel had drunk several times, sipping only a little at a time, and his companion had done the same. After this they moved the pail into one corner, where it could not be tipped over, and then resumed their sitting posture.

It was now a little past eight o'clock, as they knew from having heard the call of the guard; and in their cell it was dark as Erebus. They conversed some, but only at intervals, and then not long at a time. A silence of some minutes had lasted, and the two friends seemed to be listening to each other's breathing, when Robert said, in a low, earnest tone,—

"Karmel, you of course know that we cannot hope to live much longer."

"Yes," returned the old man, in a tone which seemed to imply that he knew what was coming.

"Then," resumed the youth, "why not reveal to me your true character. Let me at least have that satisfaction before I die."

Karmel did not answer at once. His manner of breathing seemed to indicate that he was pondering upon the question thus raised, in his mind. Finally he said, speaking as one who has just broken from an old resolution,

"Well—I know not why I should refuse to tell you the story. All things are possible with God; and it is not absolutely impossible that you may escape while I am left to die."

"Do you think I would go and leave you here?" cried Robert, warmly.

"Yes," answered Karmel, in a tone of calm, gentle reproof. "I think if they should decide that only one of us must die—and that the other might go free—you would go. If you would not, then you would act only a fool-hardy part. Yet I respect and appreciate the feeling with which you spoke."

"I may have spoken hastily," responded Robert; "and yet I adhere to what I then meant. I meant that I could not accept of an escape which would leave you to additional wrath. That I could not exert a power for myself which should leave you unaided. That is what I meant; and to that I think I should adhere."

"Well—well—I won't argue that point. I think I'll tell you my story."

The old man hesitated a few moments, and finally he resumed,—

"Of course you know I was born in England."

"I supposed so," returned Robert.

"Yes—I was born in the mother country. My parents were wealthy—very wealthy—and I received a good education. My father's nearest neighbor, with whom he could associate on terms of social equality, was Lord John Lincoln. Lord John had but two children, both sons, the eldest of which was in India, and the other at home. That youngest son was Arthur—now Sir Arthur Lincoln! He was older than I in years; but in ability, either mental or physical, I was his equal; so we were mates in our studies and at play. He was never able to win my confidence or esteem. There was always something in his manner that I did not like. I could not tell what it was; and yet 'twas very palpable to me.

"There are cases in which a like feeling may arise in any bosom. We may meet a man; become intimate and friendly with him; and yet there may be an atmosphere of repulsiveness about him which we cannot explain. We may dislike him exceedingly, and yet, when asked why we hold such feelings, we can no more tell than we can tell the color of the inhabitants of the planets. It was thus I felt towards Arthur Lincoln. I played with him in childhood; and I associated with him in early youth; but I could not like him. In fact, as we grew older, I disliked him more and more. There was something repulsive about him, and to save my soul, I could not have trusted him with my confidence.

"Time sped on, and his father died. On the very day of the funeral, news came from India that his elder and only brother was dead. That evening—after the funeral solemnities had all passed—I called upon Arthur. I thought he would be sad and downcast, being thus called upon to mourn the loss of a father and a brother at the same time, and I hoped I might be able to comfort him. When I entered I found him at full length upon a sofa and alone. When he saw who it was he leaped up and caught my hand.

"'Walter, my boy,' he cried, giving me a grip that fairly pained me—you thus learn a part of my real name—'Walter, my boy, give me joy! A father and a brother kicked off by the same puff! All that stood between me and the great wealth of our house is thus knocked over! Hi! won't we have some high old times?'

"And then, while I was speechless with utter astoundment, he slapped me upon the back and added in a tone of most horrid meaning—

"'Walt., just speak the word, and I'll give you a sure recipe for *putting* YOUR *governor under the sod, too!*'

"Merciful Heaven! In an instant I knew that he had murdered his father! My own father had been called in only a month before to draw up Lord John's will! By that instrument the vast property was to be equally divided, at his death, between his two sons. Arthur was of age—he had been so almost a year—and he wanted more money. He had drawn upon his father until the purse was closed to him. He had contracted gambling debts, and they must be paid, or he must suffer dishonor at his club. Those debts amounted to some thousands of pounds. How was he to pay them? His father had, about a month before—yes—I recollect—it was immediately after the will was made—placed him upon an allowance of four thousand pounds a-year. But that would not answer. He must have more—and that, too, immediately. So he murdered his noble old father!"

The scout stopped here, as though his feelings had in a measure overcome him; and Robert asked, with a shudder—

"But are you sure he did that murder?"

"I'll tell you how much I know," Karmel answered. "A few days after the making of the will—— And mind you, Arthur knew all about the document and its purport—— A few days after that, he and I went to London; and while there he went into an old second-hand book store, and bought a work on alchemy, which contained a full and thorough recipe for different kinds of poison. I remember the book well. It was a German publication, and gave all the information that a systematic poisoner could wish. This he studied in our room at the metropolis; and before we left he went to a druggist's and purchased a number of drugs, minerals, and liquid preparations. Now take this in connection with the remark he made to me on the evening to which I have alluded, and there is little room left for doubt. And further still: The doctors were never able to decide the precise character of the disease of which the old man died. They knew there was inflammation of the stomach, and of the internal canals; but the peculiar symptoms baffled their skill. I was the only one who knew these things; and as I kept them to myself Arthur was safe from the law.

"But from that moment I avoided him. I could not help it. He was like a pest—a plague-spot—a demon—to me, and I absolutely feared him. This led him to distrust me; and finally to fear me. Oh! had he poisoned me I should have thanked him, could I have had the power of doing so, and at the same time known what was in his heart. Ah, many a time since that hour, have I wished his vengeance had fallen upon me through the same fatal compound that killed his father! But it was not so to be."

Again, the scout stopped—this time wholly overcome. But ere long he resumed—

"As I said; or, rather, as I have intimated, Arthur, Lincoln knew that I held the knowledge of his dark crime; and when he found that I shunned him he became afraid of me. For some time he kept his feelings to himself; but at length—Ha! what sound was that?"

"It was something overhead," said Robert.

"Has some one been listening?"

"Who should do so? No. It is— But see! Look up there! —sh! Say not a word. There's somebody looking down upon us!"

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

AN AFFECTING NARRATIVE.

At the siege of Namur, there were in the ranks of the company commanded by captain Pincent, in colonel Frederick Hamilton's regiment, one Union, a corporal, and one Valentine, a private sentinel; there happened between these two men a dispute about a matter af love, which upon some aggravations, grew into an irreconcilable hatred. Union, being the officer of Valentine, took all opportunities even to strike his rival, and to profess the spite and revenge which moved him to it. The sentinel bore it without resistance; but frequently said he would die to be revenged of that tyrant. They had spent whole months thus, one injuring, the other complaining; when, in the midst of this rage towards each other, they were commanded upon the attack of the castle, where the corporal received a shot in the thigh, and fell; the French pressing on, and he expecting to be trampled to death, called out to his enemy, 'Ah Valentine! can you leave me here?' Valentine immediately ran back, and in the midst of a thick fire of the French, took the corporal upon his back, and brought him through all that danger, as far as the abbey of Salsine, where a cannon ball took off his head; his body fell under his enemy whom he was carrying off. Union immediately forgot his wound, rose up, tearing his hair, and then threw himself upon the bleeding carcass, crying, 'Ah, Valentine! was it for me, who have so barbarously used thee, that thou hast died? I will not live after thee.' He was not, by any means, to be forced from the body, but was removed with it bleeding in his arms, and attended with tears by all their comrades who knew their enmity. When he was brought to a tent, his wounds were dressed by force; but the next day, still calling upon Valentine, and lamenting his cruelties to him, he died in the pangs of remorse and despair.

It may be a question among men of noble sentiments, which of these unfortunate persons had the greater soul; he that was so generous as to venture his life for his enemy, or he who could not survive lhe man that died, in laying upon him such an obligation?

◆

THE LOSS OF A FRIEND.—Among the most painful things in human experience are those self-accusations that arise when, having lost a friend, we recall the circumstances in which we were wanting towards his friendship, we feel that now his constancy of regard is beyond a doubt, and the seal put upon his virtue, we bear a load of unanticipated debt which we cannot discharge to his heirs.

CITY AND COUNTRY VICES.

It is common and popular with many among us to decry city life as miserable, vicious and criminal, compared with the life of the country; or rather, that in proportion to population, the country village, or hamlet, is less marked with vices and crimes than the city. This sort of detraction has been especially prevalent of late—since the appearance of the garroters, and the Burdell murder. We are not disposed to shut our eyes to the truth, that ours is a wicked enough city; promising in due time to become a second Babylon or Nineveh; but we do protest against condemning her character by any false or ill-considered parallels. City and country have both their virtues and vices, and which has the excess of either, must be determined not alone by the statistics of good or evil doing, but also by a consideration of the elements and circumstances of the population of both. Taking New York, for example, we do not believe this charge of the superior viciousness of city life true. It must be remembered as a starting point, that a great city, especially one commercial and monied in its character, and a chief central seaport besides, induces, and is the natural receptacle of a flood of the adventurers and offscourings of the world, who are not a legitimate population, and of which the country village and hamlet know little or nothing. Set aside the pauperism—often vicious and criminal from its abandonment—forced upon us, the fugitives from Old World justice, seeking shelter among us, and the convicts and desperadoes actually shipped to our wharves by foreign authorities, and we have no fear that the legitimate population of our city would suffer from comparison with the most isolate community.

Wretchedness is more apparent in the city than in the country, because vast masses of it are condensed, from necessity, into small spaces, and in the circuit of a few blocks or streets, covering not a tenth part of the space of a village of five hundred souls, may be seen the concentrated suffering of many thousand poverty, vice and disease-stricken beings, with nothing healthful, hopeful or beautiful, to break the view. Get at the history of those thousands, and we find that they have been gathered from the midst of millions—the smallest community having some wretchedness and vice—and that if they were sifted back to their original places, they would be as little observable as the here and there bad specimens in all communities. This city embraces more than one-fourth of the population of the whole State. Take, then, either of the remaining three-fourths, giving to it a fair proportion of our illegitimate population, and condense it to an area equal to our city's, and the result would not shame the character of the latter.

Life in cities may from its compactness induce more violent competition among classes and professions, and health and simplicity may suffer somewhat, but as to the disposition of its population to vice and crime being heightened thereby, it cannot be proved by fair logic or figures. The greater general intelligence, from the easier access to it, and the variety of reasonable recreations and amusements in a city, of which the country is deprived, exhaust tastes and fancies, which in their absence would seek more exceptionable exercise. The faults and failings in city life are less studied and disguised than in country life. More than this, with our detective arrangements, and press ready to blazon the misdeeds of society, we trip up and expose vices and crimes that would not come to light in the country. We have fewer stumps to hide behind, and woods to dodge into—though we have quite as great a *penchant* for scandal. We read the police reports of a morning, and wonder there are so many rascals and vagabonds on so small a spot of earth. We forget that these reports embrace a population of a million—a population most heterogeneous—equal to that of some of the oldest states of the Union.

We put our veto, decidedly, upon any assumption—for assumption it must be—that would degrade the morals of our city below those of the country. Equalizing, by legitimatizing, the respective populations, and we hold the morals of the city to be equal, if not preferable. And this, too, in the face of advice we have recently given through these columns, to country young men, not to rush too hastily into the city. The city's social distinctions are less hostile and bitter; its political differences less violent, its religious divisions less abrupt, bigoted and malignant. The passions, good or bad, of society, having a larger field for exercise, are less violently exercised. The possession of power and opportunity, often produces satiety without their being called in use. As a simple illustration: lock the sweet or the bitter from the child—and "the child is father of the man"—and he will pursue it to the sacrifice of honesty and truth. Expose them openly, and their attractiveness is gone. So simple an illustration as this—fortified by numberless examples affecting human society—involves the principle which secures to an intelligent city population a superior morality, not of arbitrary, but of natural growth.

VICES OF ADOPTION.

Young men should be preserved as much as possible from the mischievous effects of ill example; for those who give it seldom stop there, they add their infamous exhortations and invitations; and if they fail, they have recourse to ridicule, which is harder for a very young man to withstand than either of the former. They should be upon their guard, therefore, against these batteries which will be played upon them. They should be desired to form no connexion, nor what they imprudently call friendships, with these people, which are, in truth, only combinations and conspiracies against good morals and good manners. There is commonly in young people a facility that makes them unwilling to refuse anything that is asked of them, that makes them ashamed to refuse, and at the same time an ambition of pleasing and shining in the company they keep; these several causes produce the best effects in good company, but the very worst in bad. If people had no vices but their own, few would have so many as they have. We would sooner wear other people's clothes than their vices, and they would sit upon us just as well. Vices of adoption are of all others the most disgraceful and unpardonable.

The world can, doubtless, never be well known by theory; practice is absolutely necessary; but surely it is of great use to a young man, before he sets out for that country, full of mazes, windings, and turnings, to have at least a general map of it, made by some experienced traveler.

ADVICE TO PARENTS.

Supposing a man's circumstances to be such, that he is able to provide for his children's subsistence and reputable appearance in the world, independent of their own industry, the only thing to be attended to is to train them up to such pursuits, as will qualify them to be most *happy in themselves, and most useful to others;* though, considering the instability of all human affairs, it should seem prudent, in most cases, that every person be taught some art, by which he may be able to maintain himself, in case of reverse of fortune.

BEHIND THE DOOR.

(*After Beranger.*)

The house is fine, but oh, beware!
You child of want, and pain, and care;
Beware, beware of calling there,
Though hunger presses hard and sore,
For there's a dog behind the door.

A surly dog—a whelp, a cur,
Although disguised in coat of fur,
And if he hears the knocker stir,
He'll answer with a growl, and more—
He'll quickly snap you from the door.

A dog that's got excess of meat,
But you must never think to eat,
Or ask from off his slice a treat;
A dog, two-legg'd instead of four,
He'll teach you not to touch the door.

He may belong to Cerberus—
For he had dogs—and fit 'twere thus
For if a dog was ever *plus*
In temper fit for Pluto's shore,
It is this dog behind the door!

1857

THE BOUND BOY.

BY MARY C. VAUGHA

> Lives of great men all remind us
> We can make our lives sublime,
> And departing, leave behind us,
> Footprints on the sands of time.
>
> PSALM OF LIFE.

Aunt Elise Everton was a widowed sister of our father, who once a year paid us a visit of several weeks. Aunt Elise was a tall, stately woman who, though she had been a widow many years, for none of her nephews and nieces could remember her husband, had never laid aside the robes of mourning. Her soft, fair complexion was almost youthful in appearance, but her hair, which was of silvery whiteness, was folded back beneath her widow's cap, and her white neck and arms were shrouded like a nun's in her heavy black garments. I, who was very curious in such matters, once asked my mother if Aunt Elise was really as old a woman as her silvered looks would seem to indicate, and received for my answer the prediction that if I lived to arrive at maturity I should observe many yet youthful people whose hair had turned white with grief or some fearful shock. With this ambiguous answer, which only set me afloat upon a sea of conjecture and speculation, I was obliged to remain content.

Aunt Elise was usually very silent and reserved when in the society of the visitors who frequented our house; but we, who were children, looked upon her as our peculiar friend. It was our belief that her stores of games and stories were inexhaustible, while nobody could dress our dolls, or mend the boys' balls, or make kites, equal to this dear aunt. As a confidant her sympathy was ever ready, and as a mediator in our quarrels, or in our violation of household rules, between us and offended parental majesty, she was invaluable. I believe it came gradually to be our opinion that, as Aunt Elise never had any sorrows or troubles of her own, she was providentially sent to bear the burden of ours.

One autumn evening we were all gathered around the hearth with the fire-light playing over us, and casting shadows of gigantic size that flickered and danced upon the walls. There were mother and Aunt Elise and five children—all of *us*, wearied out with a long day's play, grouped together in fantastic attitudes, and all our merry voices for once stilled. We were just in the mood to listen quietly to a story, and Aunt Elise, after repeated solicitations, commenced one.

"On a bitterly cold winter morning more than thirty years ago," she said, "a poor widow, who lived all alone in a little house in a remote country town, awoke very early. The dim light was just struggling through her little window, which had no curtain but the thick frost which had gathered there during the long hours of cold and darkness. Poor people such as she was, cannot indulge in the luxury of lying snugly in warm beds while their morning meal is made ready by the hands of others, so the widow, sighing gently, arose, and, shivering with the cold, groped about in the uncertain light till she had gathered her garments about her. Then, before she even attempted to light the fire which was so much needed, she went to a corner of the room where a rude flight of steps led up into the loft above. She ascended these part way, and raising the trap-door which covered the opening into the loft she called—

"'David, David, my son—come, it is time you were up. It is already quite light.'

"'Yes, mother,' a sleepy, little voice replied. 'I will get up presently, but it's quite dark up here yet. Aint you mistaken about its being daylight, mother?'

"'No, no, my son, it will be sunrise before you can get to Mr. Moody's, and you know how much you have to do after you get there.'

"'Yes, mother—yes, I'm coming,' answered the voice cheerily; and the widow descended and proceeded to rake out the coals upon the hearth and light her fire.

"Just as the bright blaze began to dart up the wide chimney, the trap-door was raised again, and a little boy of nine or ten years of age came down the steps. He was clad in scanty garments that were so much too small for him that his wrists and ankles were quite uncovered, and he had a pinched, wan look, as of one overtasked and underfed. But he had a broad, fair brow and bright hazel eyes, and his brown curls lay in thick masses around his forehead and small neck, of which they formed the only protection, except a scanty shirt-collar.

The mother looked at him wistfully as he drew on the little patched boots which had been standing beside the hearth all night. But she did not speak until he rose up, after having done that, and stood ready to let her cover his brown curls with the little cloth-cap which she held in her hand. Then she stooped down and kissed him, and patted the curly head that leaned for a moment against her bosom. The tears were in the mother's, eyes as she rose up from this brief caress.

"'Must I go, mother?' the little lad said, gazing wistfully into that loving face. A spasm of pain shot across it as he looked, but she answered steadily.

"'Yes, David, you must, though how you will reach there through the deep, snow I hardly know, and with such thin clothing. But Mr. Moody would not take you unless you were bound to him, so he has the legal control of you. If it were not for that, and that it is really a much better home than I could give you, you should not return. But try, my son, to bear all as well as you can, and as soon as the roads are passable I will come over and speak to Mr. Moody about getting you some clothes. And mind, darling, don't study at night unless Mrs. Moody will let you have a candle, for you will injure your eyes and ruin your health by groping over the fire in that way. Now you must go, dear. Good-bye, and come as early as you can on Saturday night, and I will try and see you before then at Mr. Moody's. Here, let me put this handkerchief round your neck, for it is bitterly cold.'

"'No, mother, I shall not be cold, for it will be hard enough work wading through the snow-drifts to make me warm. And I shall have to be in the steaming kitchen all day, helping Nancy wash, so I shall be warm enough then to make up for being a little cold now. Good-bye, mother. I wish I was old enough to stay with you, and take care of you.'

"And the brave little fellow, after another kiss, ran out, and his mother stood, forgetful of the cold, in the open door looking after him, and saw him struggling and floundering through the huge drifts that lay between her little cabin and the road.

"Once he turned and looked back at the little brown house, with the blue smoke-wreath curling upward from its chimney, standing there like a speck upon the snowy whiteness of the landscape. If there were tears in his eyes as he thought that the tiny house contained all he had to love in the world, and the only being who loved him, it was no shame for such a child as he; it would not have been even if the tears had rolled down the bearded cheek of manhood; for the sweet affections that cluster around the home and the mother, should only grow stronger and brighter with age.

"The widow went back with a sigh, and wiped away the tears that would dim her eyes, as she prepared her frugal morning meal. And, meanwhile, little David Bliss went on and on, through the snow-drifts, battling with them like a brave child as he was, and yet dreading not a little, as the rosy light, that foretold the sun's near approach, spread over the sky, the reprimand he would probably receive for being so late, on his return. He was desperately hungry, too, before he reached home, but he well knew that he must help to feed and water all the rich farmer's cattle and horses before he could have any breakfast, and, perhaps by the time that task was accomplished, the breakfast would be set away, after which Mrs. Moody allowed no eating until the next meal. And this was no small trouble for little Davie.

"David did get the reprimand, and an intimation that he would not be allowed to visit his mother again, unless he returned earlier, and he would have lost his breakfast but for Nancy, whose special aid he was to be that day. She had carried enough to make a nice meal, into the kitchen, and fed Davie at the dresser.

"Mr. Moody was a rich farmer, and to join acre to acre, to increase the number of the sheep on his hills, and the cattle in his pastures, and to raise the most wheat and Indian corn, to have the most profitable dairy, were the sole ambitions of himself and wife, who was evidently intended for just the position she occupied. To work, work, work, from early morning to night, was the one occupation of the whole family, and to make that work tend toward the accumulation of wealth, the sole study.

"Neither Mr. Moody nor his wife intended any unkindness to little Davie Bliss, but they only looked upon him as a machine, to be used for forwarding their one purpose, and, as he was too small and young to be very profitable then, they both agreed that they must not allow him to be any expense to them. So he had only such clothes as were absolutely necessary, and, as for giving him a candle to read by of evenings, that was a piece of wastefulness that neither of them could contemplate for a moment. That the child loved books and never had a moment of daylight unoccupied in which to read them was no concern of theirs. They were bound by the indentures to give him three months' schooling every year, until he arrived at a certain age; and if that were not enough time for cultivating his mind, why he must wait until his time was his own, not theirs.

"Mrs. Bliss was helpless, and she soon found that silence was her best part, because any remonstrances only irritated Mr. and Mrs. Moody, and made David's condition worse. She, herself, was in very feeble health, too feeble for her to have ventured the charge of providing for her fatherless boy, but she was pleased to see that, as David grew older, notwithstanding hard work and many privations, his strength increased, his muscles were firmly knit, and the sun that bronzed his handsome face could not conceal the rosy hue of health. David Bliss at fourteen,—though he worked hard, and fared hard, though he often lay upon the kitchen hearth at night, with his brown curls almost in the ashes, and read, till hours after all the household but himself were asleep, by the flickering glow of the embers—was as strong, brave and handsome a boy as there was in all the country.

"It was that very year, and soon after Mr. Moody, in a fit of great good nature, had given David his birthday as a holiday, to be spent with his mother, that Alice Bertrand, Mrs. Moody's niece, came to live at the farm. Alice was about thirteen. Her mother had long been dead, and her father but a few weeks. His will consigned her and her little fortune to the guardianship of Mr. Moody.

"Alice had been brought up in a large town, and country life had all its pure delights, with the additional charm of novelty, for her. She roamed about the fields and woods, and made a thousand strange discoveries; and it was not wonderful that she and David soon became great allies. David made a swing for her in the garden, and a coop for her pet brood of downy chickens; and David showed her where wild flowers bloomed, and rare mosses clustered; pointed out the oriole's swinging nest in the great elm, and the ground-bird's in the long grass; lifted her over the brooks and wet places when she went to gather cowslips, and drove away the gentle cows, that frightened her so much when they raised their heads and gazed at her with their large, liquid eyes. Alice had no thought of cast or station, but Mrs. Moody was firmly of opinion that the little bound boy was not a fit associate for Miss Bertrand, the heiress, and her own niece.

"David was soon made to feel this, and for the first time he was taught that strange, worldly lesson, that the creatures God made and endowed with similar faculties, and capabilities, and aspirations, and made equals in His sight, are yet rated in a sort of social sliding scale, when the arrangement of station falls into human hands. He pondered and studied his lesson long and deeply, lying of nights on the kitchen hearth with the great dim room full of shadows behind him, and the glowing coals forming strange pictures for him to gaze upon in front; while, from the distant parlor, came the faint tinkle of Alice's piano, an instrument the like of which had never been seen in all that region before. At times the door would open, and then the music swelled louder to his ear, and he would hear the voice of Alice—a sweet, childish voice that owed but little to cultivation. But to him, it sounded like the music of the angelic hosts, as he had imagined it, and filled his thoughts with visions almost as glorious as those of the 'wrapt seer of Patmos.'

"But there were human aspirations mingling with David's visions, and often, lying there in th dimness, he read the story of his future and saw, in the coals, splendid parlors, and magnificently dressed ladies, and courteous gentlemen, such as Alice had described to him, and dreamed that he moved a favored guest amid such scenes, and started up into the memory of himself, as he was, a poor bound boy, and determined that he would yet carve his way to fortune and social standing.

"Once Alice, stealing away, and crouching by his side upon the old hearth-stone, told him of a spectacle she had seen—the entry of the President into her native city—of the music, and the gay military, and the prancing horses, and the carriages, and the splendidly dressed ladies in the windows; of the excited crowd and one tall, pale man in the foremost carriage, standing up, uncovered, and bowing on either hand, while the people rent the air with shouts and the ladies showered bouquets and waved their snowy 'kerchiefs as he passed. Afterward David would see that pageant in the coals, and dream, and wake to resolve that he would yet achieve some such proud pinnacle of fame.

"It was long before these aspirations and resolves shaped themselves into definiteness. David then told his mother all he thought and all he hoped, and she, in her pride and love, resolved to do as so many mothers have done, to sacrifice much and toil much that her child might gain his purpose. Every penny of her scrupulous savings was hoarded and added to the small sums that sometimes fell in the way of the bound boy, who, though he seemed to belong, soul and body, to his master, for the time, yet sometimes earned a little by extra labor, or received some gift. Sometimes books were bought, and some were lent by the minister, and David studied at every spare moment, toiling ever by day, and growing strong and tall in spite of his intense application. The rest was carefully laid aside for the day of his freedom.

"At length it came. David was twenty-one; and Mr. Moody, with scrupulous fidelity, fulfilled his obligations. With his freedom suit upon his back, and one hundred dollars in his pocket, David started for the little brown cottage, on his twenty-first birthday; while behind him in the wagon, was his trunk filled with the stockings Mrs. Moody had knit, and a nice set of shirts on which he had seen Alice stitching for weeks, not knowing they were designed for him. And there, too, was Alice's present—an excellent collection of books, such as he had learned he would need when he went, next week, to the Academy in the county town.

"Yes, David was going to commence his career as a scholar. Only one week did he give to his mother; and then he entered upon the life of which he had dreamed.

"It was a life of struggle, but he worked his way on, as a strong man will, toward his goal, teaching and studying alternately, and even sometimes taking his place with the harvesters in the long summer vacations. All this time he had to cheer him the love and appreciation of the two persons he loved most in all the world—his mother and Alice. And he knew that when once the goal was reached, he had in expectation not only the reward of a gratified ambition, and realized hope, but the crowning joy of the love of years.

"Many a person wondered that Alice Bertrand should refuse offer after offer, and so placidly see herself growing old. She would have become David's wife long before his studies were completed, if only to put her fortune to his use, but he was determined to work his way unaided. So, while she gloried unselfishly in his stern resistance of her offers of assistance, she was content to wait, sure that all would yet be well.

"At length the weary years of waiting were over. David had passed the ordeal of his final examination, was admitted to the bar, opened his office, and won his first cause.

"Then, and not till then, did he summon Alice to his home. They were married, and David enjoyed the first holiday-time of his life, in the brief but pleasant bridal journey. Then they came back to the lovely home where David's mother, henceforth to be an honored inmate of the household of the son for whom she had sacrificed so much, awaited them.

"Every hope seemed realized, every desire fulfilled, and the cup of blessing was filled to the brim. But the bright season of their joy, like all lovely things, was brief. One month after their return, David was brought home, fatally injured by a fall from his horse. In a long night-ride from the court-town, undertaken solely for the sake of a brief visit to his home, the beast had stumbled and thrown his rider with violence to the ground.

"There were a few days of suffering and terrible anxiety, and then death came, and that splendid young form was but a lifeless lump of clay, and there was a widowed bride and a mother doubly bereaved in that house of mourning which had been a house of joy."

Aunt Elise paused here, and, looking up through our tear-dimmed eyes, we saw that her face was buried in her hands, while her whole frame shook with convulsive sobs. My mother, who had just entered, came up to her and, while she motioned the awe-struck group of children to leave the room, she bent over Aunt Elise, and said gently:

"You have overtasked yourself, my dear sister, why did you tell the children that sad story?"

"It is not sad," she replied, "or only sad for me, whose life was so shadowed in its early prime. *His* life was so beautiful, so sublime in its strong enthusiasm and its earnest endeavor, that I have long wanted the children to hear its story."

"Was it about yourself then, Aunt Elise, and our uncle, who died before we were born, that you have been telling us? Were you Alice Bertrand, and was uncle Everton once a poor bound boy? I heard that gentleman from the city, who was here the other day, tell papa that if he had lived he would have been one of the master spirits of the age, and papa said, that he considered him a very remarkable man."

"You have guessed rightly, my dear," replied Aunt Elise, smiling through her tears, "and you may be sure that I equally love and am proud of the memory of my husband. It is true his death made me old in my youth, and snapped the chords that bound his mother to life. She followed him very soon into the unseen world, and I shall join him there when God permits. But I am glad that he lived such a life, because he was an exemplar of courage, and fortitude, and perseverance, and resolution such as was needed, and many have gained strength and been upheld by it in like difficulties and in seeking like aims, and from it have learned that noblest of human lessons—'to labor and to wait.'"

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CRIME.—Crime is like an object of terror seen dimly through the obscurity of night. When afar off from it, the appearance of that object is so vaguely horrible—so shapelessly appalling, that it makes the hair stand on end; but the more the eye contemplates it—the more familiar the beholder grows with its aspect—and the nearer he advances towards it, the less terrible does it become; until at length, when he goes close up to it, and touches it, he wonders that he was ever so weak as to be alarmed by it.

ADVICE TO WIVES.

BY AUNT SARAH.

I am not going to advise you on every point concerning which a wife needs instruction; *that* would require too much time and space. I shall only call your attention to a few important points and facts; and my remarks are more especially intended for poor folks—for those who do not keep servants.

In the first place, *you must get up early*. If you do not, you can never catch up with the day's work; everything will go wrong and wearisomely.

In the second place, a wife should always try to be neatly dressed for her husband at tea-time. This is a matter of *exceeding importance*.

It is hard work, I know, for women who have three or four children, but then they have the advantage of experience; they have learned how to make the best of their time, and if they be wise, they have taught the elder ones to perform many little services for them, such as fetching and carrying, dusting, playing with and amusing the younger children, and even assisting to dress and sew for them. Besides, when children are four or five years old, it is usual to send them to school, so that it is the infant alone who ever ties the mother's hands.

I know it is the opinion of some young persons that the performance of household-work is lowering and degrading, but this is a very mistaken notion; as well might a man hold himself degraded, because he is obliged to go to his daily toil. There is no duty the proper discharge of which does not elevate a human being; and as to a woman being ashamed of being seen scrubbing a floor, or cleaning a grate, or washing up dishes, such a feeling proceeds from false pride, for she is really as respectable thus employed, as she would be, when she has finished those necessary duties, dancing a quadrille or playing on the pianoforte. I do not say she would look equally graceful in the performance of one as the other; but housework is a useful occupation, and music and dancing are ornamental accomplishments; and it is hardly possible to appear either fascinating and bewitching while handling the long broom or the scrubbing brush, though, thus employed, a woman may be quite agreeable and perfectly respectable. It is true, that some housewives, when employed in cleaning or cooking, for want of the proper knack of doing things, or from natural untidiness, so bedaub and besmear their persons and dress, that they often present even a laughable appearance, and thus they run away and hide themselves if a visitor chance to call while they are so engaged. But this need not be. The worst of the work, such as the stove-cleaning, &c., should be done before breakfast; and in doing this sort of work there is no reason on earth to smear the face and dress as well as the hands. Then some women choose to sweep and scrub in a dirty old gown and cap, with their hair hanging about their ears and their shoes down at heels. Such may well shrink from the eyes of strangers; had they true delicacy and self-respect, they would avoid even their own. Few men, however, would look on a neat woman, with her sleeves tucked up, her head tidily arranged, her large coarse apron, and her face beaming with good humor, with other sentiments than those of approval and admiration, though she might be even wielding the scrubbing brush or trundling the mop. Therefore let no woman be ashamed of being seen doing that which is useful—let all her solicitude be, to do it properly.

I had a cousin, a clever, charming girl. She could dance gracefully, draw beautifully, and play divinely; she was a most delightful companion, being both sensible and witty; and she could perform any sort of household work. The latter she was compelled to do, for there was a large family of them. My aunt being unable to afford to keep more than one servant, and my cousin Ellen being the eldest, a good deal of labor fell to her share. This she did not mind, but always performed it cheerfully and well, only taking care that it should not be known among her acquaintances, fearing, if it were, she should lose the respect and consideration her superior address and accomplishments everywhere ensured her; and as she was at all times seen dressed as a lady, and never at any occupation more useful than knitting, knotting, or worsted work, no one suspected her of being able to do what she really did. I cannot say she was without lovers, for she was universally admired and sought; but somehow the young men seemed unanimously to set her down for a fine lady, and she had completed her twenty-second year without having had an offer. Her companions all marvelled that she should remain single so long; and I, among the rest, thought it very odd that though there was often an actual contention for her hand at a ball, no one seemed to wish to secure her as a partner for life.

Among our intimates was a gentleman, distantly related to my husband, who I had often suspected greatly admired my cousin Ellen, but still he made no proposal. By mere chance I ascertained that she regarded him with feelings more favorable than she had ever entertained for another; and as the match seemed so suitable, I resolved to find out what kept them apart. A long *tête-a-tête* I had with the gentleman, favored my design. After conversing for a time on various subjects, we began to talk of our female acquaintance, and in order to disarm suspicion, I purposely avoided mentioning Ellen's name.

"It's unaccountable to me, Philip," said I, "that you don't begin to look for a wife; you know what an advocate I am for matrimony, and positively if you become an old bachelor, I'll cut your acquaintance altogether."

"I have no such intention, I assure you," answered Philip; "and, to speak the truth, I have been seeking for a wife for a long time past."

"Indeed! and are you so impressed with the idea of your own excellencies, that you cannot find a woman worthy of you?" I asked.

"Not so," replied Philip; "but I fear that the woman I am most charmed with is not a fit wife for me. I cannot marry a mere fine lady, and yet I require an accomplished woman. My wife must be cultivated and refined, and I should like that she possessed personal charms; many such women I have known; but then she must be amiable, and, though quite at home in the drawing-room, she must also understand the details of housekeeping, and be competent to manage a family, to direct her servants, and even to take the servant's place if need be."

"Why, it is a *rara avis*, indeed, that you require," said I, laughing. "I admire your modesty, young gentleman, I must confess; and, supposing you were to find such a phœnix, what, may I ask, do you propose as an equivalent? or, do you imagine your own pretty person, the privilege of bearing your name and making the most of your income, would constitute a fair exchange? What could you offer to induce such a rare piece of perfection to accept you for her lord and master?"

"What could I offer?" returned Philip with warmth; "why, I would offer her myself, not, mind you, after the fashion of too many young men of the present day. I would bind myself to her body and soul. For such a woman I would toil like a slave, if it were necessary;—for such a woman, I do not say I would die, that is tame, but for such a woman, I would live. I would shield her from evil;—I would lighten her of every care;—I would surround her with every comfort; in short, I would dedicate my whole existence to the promotion of her happiness."

"Gently, gently," cried I, "moderate your transports, and tell me if you know of any lady who approaches near the perfection you demand?"

"I know one," he replied, slightly hesitating, "that I would give much to learn possesses one or two of the requisites—some I know she has, but the most essential I fear she wants. Listen to me, my friend; I am at present in flourishing circumstances, but how can I be sure they will continue? Now, I am resolved never to marry a woman who is not a thorough house-wife. Accomplished beauties too often prove the ruin of their husbands; and, besides, I cannot afford to maintain an expensive establishment. Now your cousin Ellen is the most loveable creature I ever beheld, but then is she not a *fine lady*, unable to exist without servants to wait on her?"

"By no means," I answered; "Ellen is as notable as she is accomplished and refined; everything in the house is under her direction, and all the order you observe in their domestic arrangements is the effect of her good management."

"You surprise me!" exclaimed Philip; "nay, surely you jest. To confess the truth, I have, in order to discover her sentiments, sometimes hinted at the desirableness of the *useful* being added to the *ornamental* in a woman's education; but she has so constantly shrunk from the subject, that I feared she was totally opposed to my views."

"Ah!" said I, "that is Ellen's weak point; but come with me to-morrow, and pay her a morning visit; I promise you shall see her in all her glory."

Accordingly, the next day we went together; and I desired the servant, who showed us into the parlor, not to say that I had any one with me, but just to tell my cousin that I wished to speak to her, and was in haste. In two minutes down she came, the very picture of health and good humor.

"My dear cousin!" she said, not perceiving Philip, "you are a privileged person, for you know I am invisible to company at this hour; what can you want? is it a new pattern, or have you come to help me toss up the beds and sweep the rooms?"

At this moment her eye rested on the figure of Philip reflected in the looking-glass; but, finding herself fairly caught, she had too much self-respect to betray any confusion. Gracefully apologizing for her dishabille, which by-the-bye was most becoming, she entered easily into conversation, and thus completed her conquest of the heart of poor Philip.

Six months after this incident, Philip and Ellen pronounced their vows at Hymen's shrine, and I never heard that either of them had found cause to repent.

Now, let young ladies be sure that Philip is not alone in a dislike to *fine lady wives*; it is a feeling shared by the greater number of his sex—indeed, by all the sensible portion. As long as girls study only to excel in the lighter acquirements of female education, neglecting, nay despising, the useful and essential, let them not wonder at the large portion of young men remaining unmarried. How can a man with any forethought but shrink at connecting himself with a woman who is ignorant of the commonest duties of a wife and mistress? Blind indeed must love have rendered him who would take to his hearth and his bosom a being, whose chief recommendations are, that she can play and sing, dance the polka, and entertain company; and this is the gross amount of requisites many candidates for matrimonial honors can command. Such accomplishments are duly appreciated in a ball-room, or at an evening party, but they are not for every-day wear. Men will choose such ladies for partners in a quadrille, but not for wives. Not that I mean to undervalue music or dancing, and an elegant address; on the contrary, as adjuncts they are desirable, only let them take their proper place; the portrait first, then the superbly carved or gilded frame; for, after the useful, the ornamental is gratifying and welcome. A mere household drudge no man can desire; he needs also a companion, and this requires a refined mind and a cultivated intellect. Mere dancing and singing soon weary a husband; but a well-stored head, and a kindly heart, command his respect and secure his affection.

TO CLEAN CARPETS.

Before proceeding to sweep a carpet, a few handfuls of waste tea-leaves should be sprinkled over it. A stiff hair broom or brush should be employed, unless the carpet be very dirty, when a whisk or carpet-broom should be used first, followed by another made of hair, to take off the loose dust. The frequent use of a stiff carpet-broom soon wears off the beauty of the best carpet. An ordinary clothes-brush is best adapted for superior carpets. When carpets are very dirty they should be cleaned by shaking and beating. Brussels carpets may be cleaned as follows:—Take them up and shake and beat them, so as to render them perfectly free from dust. Have the floor thoroughly scoured and dried, and nail the carpet firmly down upon it. If still much soiled, it may be cleaned in the following manner:—Take a pailful of clean cold spring water, and put it into about three gills of ox-gall. Take another pail with clean cold water only. Now, rub with a soft scrubbing brush some of the ox-gall water on the carpet, which will raise a lather. When a convenient-sized portion is done, wash the lather off with a clean linen cloth dipped in the clean water. Let this water be changed frequently. When all the lather has disappeared, rub the part with a clean dry cloth. After all this is done, open the window to allow the carpet to dry. A carpet treated in this manner will be greatly refreshed in color, particularly the greens. It is very advisable in laying down carpets at first to cover the floor beneath them with large sheets of paper, so as to prevent dust from rising between the boards. A carpet lasts longer by adopting this precaution. Kidderminster carpets will scarcely bear the above treatment without becoming so soft as to get speedily dirty again. This may in some measure be prevented by brushing them over with a hot weak solution of size in water, to which a little alum has been added. Curd soap, dissolved in hot water, may be used instead of ox-gall, but it is more likely to injure the colors if produced by false dyes. When there are spots of grease on the carpeting, they may be covered with curd soap, dissolved in boiling water, and rubbed with a brush until the stains are removed, when they must be cleaned with warm water as before. The addition of a little gall to the soap renders it more efficacious.

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THE TRUE END OF KNOWLEDGE.—The end of all knowledge is to understand what is fit to be done; for to know what has been, and what is, and what may be, does but tend to that.

ALONE.

BY EMMA ALICE BROWNE.

There is a sound in all the land
Of the wind and the driving rain,
And a wild sea breaking on dead, white sand,
With a desolate cry of pain,
As if its mighty and terrible heart
Were heaved with a human pain!

I stand alone with the wind and the rain,
As many a poet hath stood—
Soul-lit, with the beautiful inner light,
And the sense of a higher good—
But feeling, because of the world, as if
My life were written with blood!
And my soul keeps sobbing a sorrowful song,
Like a brook in an autumn wood!

Blow wind! blow wind!—fall, desolate rain!
And cry, oh sorrowful sea!
To the dumb, white sand thy merciless pain,
For such hath my heart for me,—
Pitiless! pitiless! homeless and citiless!
Such is the world to me!

FOREST SKETCHES---NO. 14.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS

BY COL. WALTER P. DUNLAP.

ADVENTURE WITH A BUFFALO BULL.

Ned Hobson had thrown away the stump of a cigar, and having arranged his seat so that he could sit in a half lying posture, he asked Garl to tell a story.

"Weren't you wonst out in the Osage diggings?" asked the old trapper, taking his pipe from his mouth, and shaking out the ashes.

"Yes," answered Ned. "I was with a small party in 'forty-one, that went out as far as Fort Scott."

"That yer's right on the Missouri border," suggested Garl.

"Yes," said Ned. "It's on one of the tributaries of the Osage River."

"Wal," resumed the trapper, pulling his pipe out again, "ye must 'ave had some sort of an adventur out thar."

"O, yes," responded Ned. "I had several. I had one tug with an old buffalo bull, that came plaguey nigh being my last tug on this big ball of dirt."

"Then I reckon as how't you'd better gin it to us. I'd rayther listen this evenin' than talk. Jest poke along an' tell us 'bout it."

We all maintained the propriety of Ned's giving us an account of his adventure; and he did so as follows:—

"As I said before, in the summer of 'forty-one, I was with a party hunting through the western part of Missouri. We had horses and tents; and our baggage was carried in a heavy wagon, drawn by mules. We left Jefferson city, and struck the Osage at Warsaw; and from that we took our course to the westward. One pleasant afternoon we came across buffalo tracks, and from their appearance we knew there must be a large drove of them.

"As soon as we came to a good place we hauled up and drove down our stakes. It was very near sundown when we got fairly camped, so we got supper, and then concluded to wait till morning for further work out of doors.

"In the morning we got an early breakfast, and then started out. We took the open way across a sort of rocky plain, beyond which was a splendid grove of maples; and just as we entered this grove we heard the tramp of buffaloes. We put on at full gallop, and in a few minutes came in sight of a fine drove upon the edge of a stream. Part of the herd turned down the stream, and part started up. There were eight of us hunters; and as the herd separated, five of the party turned their horses' heads up the stream, where the largest number of buffaloes had gone. The other three, of whom I was one, turned the other way.

"There were fifty animals, at least, in the lot we three gave chase to, and they started off in fine style. We had followed them half a mile, and shot two cows, when we saw, clear 'way ahead, where the stream turned to the right, and made a bend around a wooded hill. I told my companions I'd cut across and head the buffaloes off. They liked the idea, so I turned short to the right, feeling sure that I should hit the river in that direction.

"Ye see, we had seen a stream a mile or so back, and I knew this must be the same one; and if 'twas, then this bend kept on till it made over half a circle. I had ridden about half a mile, when I came to a deep gully, where the water had at some time dug its way into the earth. My dog, who was ahead, leaped over easily; and I knew my horse could do it, too. So I put him up, and he made the reach. He cleared the gully with four feet to spare; but he stumbled and fell, and when I got him up I found he had badly sprained his right fore foot. He had struck a small rolling stone, and turned the ankle. I tried to lead him, but he could not walk; or, at least, not without great difficulty.

"I had but little time for considering. I could hear the buffaloes away to my left; and I knew they would be around before long. I drew down the rain and tied it to a small tree, and then seizing my rifle, I kept on afoot. I ran most of the way, only slackening into a kind of dog-trot once in a while to rest; for having been so long used to the saddle it rather took hold of me to run.

"By and by I came out into an open prairie,—that is, if ye can call such a place a prairie. It was covered with short, crisp grass in some places, and in others, it was bare sand. On the further side of this opening, I saw the stream; and to the left, half a mile off, I saw a dozen buffaloes coming down. I wondered where the rest were; but I saw there would be a chance for a good shot if I could get near enough; so I left the wondering for another time, and put off for the stream, hoping to reach a place where I saw a small clump of bushes growing.

"I reached the bushes just in time, and called my dog in. The buffaloes were not far off, and were evidently going to pass between me and the stream, which was only a few rods distant. I supposed the animals must have seen me, and I feared they would turn off; but they did not. There were just twelve of them, and mostly cows and yearlings; but there were two huge bulls in advance, looking as ugly as you please."

"'Pears to me," said old Garl, shaking his head, "I should 'a been kind o' skeery like, 'bout firin' under them sarcumstances."

"Mind you, I had never seen a buffalo before to be shot at," explained Ned. "I had an idea that they were afraid of man. But at that time I was too much excited to think. I had heard my companions talk so much about killing buffaloes, that I'd become so eager to put a bullet through one of their hearts, that I should have fired if I'd known all about 'em. However, I didn't think of danger. My only thought was, that I'd shoot one of 'em, and that the rest would run like mad.

Presently they came. They were not more than three rods off, and I thought the shot a sure one. I cocked my rifle and brought it to my shoulder. I was sure. I pressed the trigger, and at that instant my dog gave a quick, sharp howl. I fired, but the howl startled me, and the shot was not true. I hit the buffalo—the largest of the two bulls—and he stopped and shook his huge head and shoulders. In a moment more he turned and saw me. The rest of the herd had gone. He gave one ugly, defiant roar, and then turned his body for a charge. I saw blood trickling down the long hair upon his right shoulder, and from the place where the crimson drops started out I judged that the ball had only struck some two inches out of the way. But it might have been a foot for that matter, for when my dog howled I was so startled that I lost my aim entirely. I thought he was going to spring out, and my first impulse was to stop him; so, ye see, I just lost all, for my finger was already too hard pressed on the trigger to be stopped. Something must have bitten the dog; but I had no time to look.

"As soon as I saw the bull turned towards me I knew he would attack me. I knew enough of the animal for that. I told ye he went between me and the stream, so I had a run across the opening before me. I had no time to lose—not an instant—and I started. The distance to the wood was all of fifty rods. My only idea was to reach it. What I should do when I got there I did not stop to consider—I only wished to get there. I was as tall then as I am now, and with not an ounce of superfluous flesh upon my bones. I ran as I never ran before nor since. I heard the tramp of the infuriate monster behind me, and I knew he was gaining!

"Out from the edge of the wood—just a few yards out—stood a clump of maples which seemed to all grow from one immense root. There were two large ones and two small ones. Could I reach them? I was not over half way across yet. I told ye before that I wasn't used to running. It took my breath from me. Every nerve in my body was strained, and every muscle was beginning to relax. I heard the tramp of the bull not two rods behind me! My rifle was heavy, and it bore me down. It was of no use to me as it was, and it might be the cause of my death if I hung on to it. It prevented me from a free swing of my arms. I knew the brute was gaining, and I felt the eight and twenty pounds of steel and wood wearing me out. I let it drop; and then I ran more easily.

"The maples were now ten rods distant, and the bull not a rod behind me. My dog was at his heels, but he paid little attention to him; though I am sure it made a slight difference. Had it not been for the annoyance of the dog I think the bull would have caught me before I had run twenty rods. I am sure of it.

"Four rods remained to the trees. Could I reach them alive? I heard the puffing of the buffalo, almost like the snort of a locomotive; and I fancied I could feel his breath as it struck my back!—One rod more! Had it been two rods I should have sunk down. The trees had become indistinct—the earth seemed rising up before me—my head was almost bursting, and my heart was in my throat, aching as though it were broken! One more effort—a wild plunge—a low, painful groan—and I turned the trees and fell against the largest one. The bull kept on a few yards, and then stopped and turned. His eyes were glaring wildly; his mouth was foaming; and the foam, mingled with blood, streamed down his swart breast.

"He was tired as well as I; for he had been on the run a long while; and he stopped now to take breath. Had he kept up the chase—had he attacked me then—I should have been at his mercy, for I could not have moved around that tree to have saved a dozen lives! I was completely, utterly exhausted. I would have given all I owned in the world could I only have thrown myself full length upon the ground; but of course I dared not do that.

"Pretty soon my dog started out; but the first movement the bull made was to take him on his short sharp horns and toss him over his back. Shrieking with, pain the poor dog crawled back to the trees and crouched down at my feet, where he lay and regarded the buffalo with anything but pleasant looks.

"But this movement of the dog's kind of served to start the monster up, for as soon as he had disposed of his tormentor he turned towards me and ploughed his head into the ground. This operation he repeated several times—thrusting his horns into the earth and tossing up the dirt—and then he plunged towards me. I had regained a very little of my strength—at any rate, enough to enable me to move around the trees—and I did so.

"One thing was fortunate for me. As I told you before, these four trees seemed to grow all out from one root, just as you often see maples, and hence I had more surface of barricade between me and my enemy. I could move around them, or in between them, as I pleased. Their stumps, or butts, were together at the surface of the earth, but they spread apart sufficiently to admit of my stepping through between them anywhere. But at first I passed wholly around them.

"In a very few moments the fear of death was upon me again? The bull seemed to feel sure of me when he first plunged towards me; but when he found that I avoided him by slipping around the trees he stopped, and fairly spoke his rage and disappointment."

"Spoke 'um?" interrupted Fitz, whose eyes and ears were both open. The darkey had the most unlimited confidence in Ned's assertions, and hence he took everything literally.

"Yes," returned Ned; "I never saw more plainly spoken language than that bull used then; and I heard some of it, too. He stopped—he shook his head—he gave a roar that made my heart quake—and then gazed savagely at the trees around which I had passed, as though he would wreak his vengeance upon them. By my soul, I never saw so much pure hatred and ugliness expressed in any other face as I saw in his then. There was mischief in it, I tell you.

"While the bull stood there calculating how he should work the thought occured to me of climbing one of the trees. If I could gain a perch up there I should be safe, for of course my companions would be after me before a great while. I cast my eyes quickly up—I gazed around—and the hope was gone. There was not a limb anywhere within my reach!

"For a little while after this hope failed me I felt weak; but I overcame it by an effort, and was just in time to avoid the infuriate beast as he came dashing around the trees. He seemed determined now. With his head down; his eyes glaring like coals of fire; and his long tail high in the air, he bounded after me. Round and round we went, I keeping close in to the trees, and he performing a circle some thirty feet in diameter, every once in a while taking a cut in, and then flying off on a tangent, and coming back straight for the trees.

"I began to look for my companions. I could stand it no longer. You cannot form any idea of how I felt. I cannot tell it; but I tell ye I can remember it. I looked in all directions, and yelled with all my power; but I saw no one—I heard no one. I felt sure that in a few minutes at the furthest I should be tossing, a mangled, helpless mass, upon the monster's horns.

"The buffalo was opposite to me, and I had stopped from absolute exhaustion. He saw me stop, and he dashed towards me. He was coming directly between the trees, and I dodged around. As he saw me make the motion he changed his course. Around I went again, sustaining myself, by the trees—actually holding myself up by them!

"Faint—weary—dying, almost—I staggered on. I looked off once more to see if my companions were coming. I tried to cry out, but I was too weak. I gazed down upon my dog. Poor Lion! He knew that his master was failing! He looked up and whined, and there were tears in his eyes. He surely wept then—wept because he knew we had met an enemy which had cowed him. 'Good-bye!' I said. 'Good-bye, Lion!' The faithful creature understood me, for he reached up his paws, and then turned away as though he would have me run for home.

"The bull had stopped again, and was glaring at me as before—glaring at me as though he would rush through the very trees that separated us. At that moment a thought came to me that sent the blood rushing with power through my system! In an instant a supernal hope darted to my soul, and under its influence every nerve and muscle of my frame were operated upon as though by the shock from a galvanic battery.

"I felt sure the bull had become so utterly carried away by anger and chagrin that he was blind with madness. He had no thought but to overtake me—but to wreak his vengeance out upon me. I felt assured that if I had remained still when he dashed at me before, he would have tried to pass between the trees! Even he might have known better in his sober moments; but he knew it not now. He had surely thought of trying it once—why might he not try it again?

"As I said before, the thought gave me strength. You know how a dying man will momentarily put forth a wondrous power beneath the influence of sudden hope. It was so with me. I drew my knife—it was a stout, keen Bowie—and moved to the space between two trees; it was between the two smaller ones. There I confronted him, and shook my left fist in his face. My soul! how he did make the dirt fly! He ploughed his horns deep into the earth, and then shook his head aloft. There I stood, and still shook my fist. Presently I saw him gather for a plunge, and as he did so I moved back a single step—not to the right hand or the left, but only back as though I would make off. He took the hint, and in a moment more he made a dive.

"Would he turn? No. On he came—I still facing him with that defiant shaking of the fist. His head passed between the trees—his broad shoulders struck them—they quivered beneath the shock, and the smallest one bent from its very roots under the mighty strain! My heavens! what a gasp of agony burst from my lips at that moment! The huge monster was coming through!

"Instinctively I turned; but I knew I could not run! I could not stand much longer. I looked again upon the buffalo. His swart shoulders had entered between the trees—they had passed through—but he got no further. The bended maple, like the jaw of a trap, had sprung back into the hollow behind the shoulder, and there he was held, with his forefeet all of twelve inches from the earth!

"Oh! what a moment that was to me! I saw the position of my enemy in an instant. I had not thought it possible for him to thrust his shoulders through that place. I had hoped that he might run his head through, and jam his shoulders in far enough to hold him while I could strike. But when I saw how the stout tree sank into his flesh I knew he could not help himself; and especially so since his forefeet were useless to him.

"I walked up and looked at him! I slapped his black nose again and again. I kicked him with all my new found strength. Then I moved around to his right side, and felt for the socket above his breast-bone. I found it, and with one plunge I sent the broad blade of my knife home to his heart! The blood spurted forth as though from an engine, the pressure of the trees having held the life-tide bursting in the huge arteries of the throat!

"The beast glared at me once more—his eyes sent forth one more volume of fire—there was one more rumbling effort at that old roar—and then his head dropped. The fire of the eye went out—there was one mighty throe of the huge frame—and the monster was dead!

"At that moment I heard my name pronounced. I looked around, and there were my two companions coming up. They had found my horse; and had then started after me. And they found me; but I tell you plainly, they found but a weak specimen of a man. They had to lift me upon a horse, and then one of them got up behind to hold me there.

"But I was quite well in the morning; and when we made a meal from the meat of that buffalo bull, you may be sure I had some thoughts running in my mind that did not accompany every meal!"

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

E. N.—You are mistaken in regard to a subscriber's having a right to defer paying his quarter's postage until the expiration of the quarter. He must either pay quarterly in advance, or else pay the postage on each paper as he takes it from the office. By paying quarterly in advance, his postage costs but half as much as it does when paid on each paper.

A LAWYER IN CHAMBERS STREET.—We would not like to give such information as you ask, about a contributor, in the columns of the LEDGER; but if you will communicate with us privately, giving us your address, we may be able to gratify you.

CONSTANT READER.—We never vary from our published terms of subscription. We had rather people would not take the LEDGER than bother us in regard to this point.

A SUBSCRIBER is engaged to be married to a young lady whom he once thought he loved, but whom he is now certain he does not love and could not make happy as his wife. He wants to adjust the matter in an honorable way, and so as to retain the respect and friendship of the young lady and of her parents; and the question is, how shall he do it? Our subscriber has a difficult task to perform, and should the lady and her parents prove incorrigible it will be an impossible one. The best course to pursue, would be to state the case frankly to the young lady, and do whatever may be necessary to save her feelings. Some girls would at once release a man from his promise the moment they supposed he no longer loved them. It would be much better to do that, than to be tied to a husband who, not *loving* his wife, would be apt after a while to *hate* her.

SUSAN.—Every girl must ultimately rely upon her own judgment, or at least upon her own decision, in matters of love. The difficulty is, that girls, and, in fact, all inexperienced persons, are incapable of acting upon general principles, but trust entirely to their blind impulses. Many a woman marries a man whom she *knows* has basely betrayed one of her sex to ruin, simply because he treats *her* kindly, and vows eternal love, etc. Men know better than to act thus. When a man has once robbed a till, or otherwise exhibited a flaw in his integrity, no merchant, or trader, or business man whatever, will entrust his vital interests to him, no matter how fair his promises or vehement his vows of fidelity. Women should be equally careful.

LINDA says she answered a matrimonial advertisement, and that now the "gentleman" wishes an exchange of daguerreotypes. She is in her seventeenth year, and is still at school; she don't know whether "the step she is about to take" would be improper or not, and would therefore be obliged for our opinion. We are astonished that any young lady should be so destitute of self-respect, dignity, commonsense, and maidenly modesty, as even to think of exchanging daguerreotypes with a stranger under such circumstances. It was improper to answer the advertisement, and it would be the height of folly and indecency to exchange miniatures in the manner proposed.

SALLIE wishes to know if it would be improper for an engaged young lady, whose lover is absent and neglects writing to her, to keep company with another gentleman! That would depend upon the amount of neglect she had experienced and her intentions for the future. If her betrothed had treated her in such a manner as would warrant her in breaking the engagement, and she had determined to do so, then she could, with propriety, act just as she would have done had no such engagement ever existed; otherwise, she should be true to her promise.

MISS BLANK says that a young man "in this place"—(we omit the name of the city out of regard to Miss B.'s feelings and reputation)—had the impertinence to dispute a statement which she made the other day, for which she wishes us to blow him up and expose his ignorance. Her statement was to the effect that there are 32 States in this Union, and that the District of Columbia is one of them. Miss B. says, "I am a graduate of our High School here, and am now teaching a large school, and I think I ought to know." So you ought, Miss B.; and therefore we will now inform you that there are but 31 States in this Union, and that the District of Columbia is not one of them.

BLACKBIRD.—If your father has indentured you to anybody, and it is agreed that you shall remain until you are twenty-one, you must do so, or take the consequences. If your father helps you to break the conditions of the agreement, your master can prosecute him for damages. On the contrary, if your master does not keep his part of the bargain, he can be prosecuted; and in some cases indentures can be cancelled on account of the injustice of masters. But such a thing must be done legally. Your own personal dissatisfaction and dislike of the business has nothing to do with the matter, so far as the legal rights of the case are concerned.

DOMINGO has a lady friend, that is very low-spirited and down-hearted, who, when he asks her what is the matter, invariably gives that eminently womanish and unsatisfactory answer—"Oh, nothing!" and Domingo wishes to know what course he had better take for the purpose of ascertaining the cause of her troubles; for, fathom the mystery he must. We should advise Domingo to send a first-class physician to examine the case.

DESIAH.—This young lady is promised a handsome present in case she gets married during the current year, and being naturally desirous of obtaining the gift, she wishes us to tell her how she can secure it and a husband. As we have never had occasion to acquire a husband, we know nothing about the best and cheapest sources of obtaining that useful article. Desiah had better consult her mother, or some lady who has been married several times.

M. A. V., Preston.—We cannot possibly make room for your contributions. In almost every number of our paper during the past twelve months we have been begging, beseeching and praying writers with whom we are unacquainted, not to send us any manuscript. We are overrun with it.

FRANK.—We cannot say whether or not, you would violate any physical law by marrying your second cousin, nor whether you had "better marry her." You and she both seem determined to run the risk, and we think no serious harm will come of it. Consult your family physician.

KATE—You had better follow the dictates of your own judgment, no matter what others may say. Of course, if you offend your father, you must not expect him to be as generous towards you as he would be in case you tried to gratify his whims.

MISSES E. J. & M. L.—It would be indiscreet for two young ladies, who have no friends in New York, to visit this city alone. They would be exposed to all sorts of impositions and dangers.

JOHN P. C., wishes to know, if, when a company is called from the parlors to dinner or tea, the ladies should precede the gentlemen, or *vice versa*. Neither; the company should pair off, and the gentlemen escort the ladies to the table.

OLD SUBSCRIBER, Washington.—Listen to the advice of your parents. The tone of your letter indicates that you are a young man who would be very apt to be in the wrong, in any difficulty with your father or mother.

A STONECUTTER wants to know whether it is the *last* blow which breaks a stone, or whether each blow of several contributes a little towards its breaking. The latter is the truth. The cohesion of the particles is gradually overcome.

VICTORIA.—We do not see how there could be any harm in a "young lady," forty-five years of age, accepting a ring from an intimate male friend a dozen years younger—or older, either.

FAIRIE BELLE.—"Model Artistes" are shameless creatures in human form, who make a disgusting exhibition of themselves, for the gratification of vulgar spectators.

EDWARD G.—No. A postmaster, at whose office a money letter is registered, is not bound to refund the money in case the letter should be lost. Nobody refunds the money. Either the sender, or the person to whom it is sent, has to lose the money; and which shall be the loser is a matter of agreement between the parties. If the person to whom the letter is addressed agreed to run the risk of having the money sent to him in a registered letter, the loss will fall on him; otherwise it will fall on the sender.

CONFUSION.—This correspondent says that a young lady who boards in the same house with him, has ceased speaking to him entirely, and does not even recognize him when they meet; and he naturally wishes to know what he had better do about it. If you care anything for the lady's friendship ask her frankly what is the reason of her strange behavior towards you; if you care nothing about her, don't do or say anything to her, but let her keep up the game until she becomes tired of it.

KARMEL wishes to know if it would be wrong for lovers to correspond, against the wishes and commands of the young lady's parents. That would depend upon the age of the young lady, the relations she sustains at present to her parents, and many other circumstances. A daughter should, as a general rule, obey her parents; but a case might arise, and cases often do arise, in which she would be justified in differing with them in opinion and action.

CRITIC.—You could not have read our answer with the care which a critic should always exercise. We did not say that Michigan is the "Buckeye" State. We said Ohio is called the "Buckeye," and Michigan the "Wolverine" State. You are wrong, too, in your designation of Indiana, which is called the "Hoosier" State. Illinois is the "Sucker" State.

L. D. B.—We cannot answer your question unless you tell us what State you were married in; where you lived when your wife got her divorce; for *what* the divorce was obtained; in what State it was obtained; where you now live, and where you wish to marry. Your other questions are too foolish to answer, and rather indicate that your wife was right in getting a divorce from you.

MONEY, Philadelphia.—We do not think that a young lady of good principles would permit a man whom she cares nothing about to spend much money for her, nor would she accept many presents from him. The grasping disposition which a certain class of women exhibit in this respect, is a most odious feature.

SALEM wishes to know if, in escorting a company of ladies through the street, they should be joined by others whom he did not know, it would be proper for him to join in their conversation, without being introduced? Yes; he should act as though it was "all right," and make himself as agreeable as possible.

NELLIE.—It is not probable that any man this side of Utah can entertain the idea of marrying two girls at the same time. If your affianced has come to the determination to break his engagement, on account of any wrangles with others nearly related to you, the best thing you can do is to let him go.

G. T. WHITE.—The item about the one hundred and forty millions of dollars ($140,000,000,) being held by the law officers of the English Government in abeyance for the heirs of a man named Lawrence, who died without known heirs, we got from a Rochester paper. We know nothing as to its reliableness. It may be true, and it may be false.

A. F. P.—The manner in which you should commence a letter to a lady depends upon your relations with her. If she is simply an acquaintance, you should address her as "Madam," whether she be married or single. From this general starting point you can increase the familiarity and endearingness of your epithets according to circumstances.

A MINNESOTA GIRL.—You and your lover are as foolish as children. All lovers who quarrel are foolish; in fact, anybody who *quarrels*, under any circumstances, is a fool. It matters little what becomes of such people, so we shall not trouble ourselves to advise you—until you become too sensible to quarrel and spend your time in contemptible broils.

PARMELEE.—Unless negligence can be established against the Railroad companies, the owners of the property *in transitu*, which was destroyed through the agency of the recent freshets, will have to stand the loss. No body is held liable in damages for losses sustained by what in law is called "the act of God,"—such as floods, storms, and the like.

O.—You should inform the man who persists in paying offensive attention to your wife and follows her whenever she goes out, that if he does not desist you will resort to coercive measures. If the case is as bad as you state, you can have the offender arrested and made to give bail for his good behavior.

AN UNKNOWN CAMILLE.—We would not knowingly encourage any girl to "go on the stage." We would sooner encourage her to go to Greenwood, or any other cemetery. Your motive for desiring to "win a name" is a very foolish, not to say insane one.

A. W.—You had better obey your father in all things. He probably would have no objection to your spending a reasonable amount of time with the young lady, but we must think with him, that four nights a week till 12 o'clock, is rather an extensive business for a boy of your age.

W. O.—There is but one way to manage such things; ask the young lady if she will be your wife, and then she can speak to the point. No girl of proper delicacy would speak in reference to such a matter, on mere "hints." You must come out plainly.

ELLA.—Lovers are queer creatures, like all the rest of us, and some men are very obstinate and tyrannical. But a man who is engaged to be married should *not* gallant other ladies to public places and leave his affianced to fret and mope in the chimney corner.

CORNELIA.—We know nothing about the rules, studies or government of Oberlin College. You can probably obtain such information as you desire, by writing to the President of that institution.

MENSELLA.—We believe that what are called "ornamental branches" in female seminaries, include music, drawing, painting, embroidery and all manner of fine needle-work, and wax-fruit-work.

H., Columbus.—It is customary to ask a lady's permission to bring a friend to see her. To take a man to visit a lady, without first consulting her about it, might lead to some unpleasant meetings.

KITTIE AND MITTIE.—A lady is always at liberty, at any and all times, *not* to recognize a man whose acquaintance is disagreeable to her—even if he has been introduced to her at a party.

PRO BONO PUBLICO.—You are mistaken. A postmaster has the right to take the wrapper off any newspaper, and examine it to see if there is any writing on it, or any communication that would subject it to letter-postage.

A CONSTANT READER.—In far-off Southern or Western towns, where news-dealers have to pay extra for freight on their papers, five cents is not an exorbitant charge for the LEDGER; but *more* than that is an imposition.

CORA.—It is always best for a girl to let a man "take his own course," in regard to other young ladies; and at the same time she should take her own course with regard to her own affairs—including beaux.

A FRIEND.—We know of nothing which would remove small-pox scars from the face. When a young person has had this disease, the marks are sometimes removed by the lapse of time.

R. C.—It would do a student no harm to mingle often in society while studying his profession, especially the society of sensible and intelligent women.

INQUIRER, Warren, O.—We can furnish you back numbers of the LEDGER containing the story you refer to for about fifty cents.

A READER OF THE LEDGER, Baltimore.—Apply to Mr. Henry Taylor of your city; he knows as much about the periodical business as anybody in that part of the world.

NO. SIXTY-SEVEN.—Of course it is wrong for a young lady to loan her engagement ring. She who would do such a thing, cannot have much delicacy or taste.

HALLEY.—We know of no book called the "Jersey Prison Ship." Mr. Cobb referred to the vessel itself, which perished long since.

O., Sing Sing.—It is an imposition for any one to charge five cents for the LEDGER in Sing Sing, or in any other place so near New York.

FANNY E.—A woman is not of age in this State until she is twenty-one, although it is a popular notion that eighteen is the age at which a woman comes into her majority.

NED.—It does a *good* boy, who has a plenty of common-sense, no harm to go to sea. Your recommendations would not help you much here.

W. C. SMITH.—Orion is pronounced O-rion or O-ri-on, according to the taste of the speaker. The balance of "authorities" is in favor of the latter.

HANK.—Obey your parents; stay at home; do whatever a son should; stop grumbling, and "be a man;" and you will probably feel better.

T. J. S.—Thomas Jefferson was not an infidel, although he was far from being a saint.

JOHN E.—See the LEDGER for March 14th, for full information concerning the Naval Academy at Annapolis.

W. M. P.—Two cents is the postage on newspapers to Great Britain; four cents to France and Germany.

CARDIFF, N. Y.—The postage on the LEDGER is 26 cents a year to your place, if paid quarterly in advance.

A CONSTANT READER, Baltimore.—Of course it is always prpoer for a man to protect a lady from insult.

J.—We are much obliged to you, but really we can not make room for any new contributors.

RICHARDS.—It costs but five cents to get a letter registered.

J. C. T.—Mind your father.

⁂ *Several letters stand over to be answered in our next.*